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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A Dialectical Resolution to the Conflict of Traditional and Progressive Education: A Whiteheadian Approach

by

Ivan Gaetz

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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ISBN 0-315-70271-0

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ABSTRACT

Traditional and progressive education compete for influence and dominance within the field of formal schooling, generating conflict in educational practice, theory and philosophy. This conflict has resulted in schooling that is characterized by reactionary swings in emphasis from one to the other mode of education. A philosophy of education based on the thought of Alfred North Whitehead can overcome this oscillation by largely unifying the basic philosophical tenets of both the traditional and progressive through reconfiguring conflicting positions as elements of a dialectic.

Whitehead's description of actual entities and the dynamic prehension process supply the philosophical framework for this dialectical unification of educational theory and philosophy. Especially significant for resolving the problem in education are Whitehead's emphases on the interrelatedness of all aspects of existence, and the creative possibilities that arise out of the polarities within, and tensions between, all components of personal experience.

The elements of the dialectic consist of the various traditional and progressive views on the nature of mind and knowledge, the meaning of human experience, the nature of humanness, and the notions of truth, value and progress. But rather than being seen as contradictory positions and counter-positions, the various related assertions in educational philosophy, according to the dialectical arrangement, are posited as complementary elements that can, only together, completely account for and affirm a full range of learning experiences, and provide a harmonization and balance to education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My supervisor, Dr. Walker, has given generously of his time, offering guidance and analyses throughout my studies in educational philosophy, and over an extended period has remained immeasurably helpful throughout the development of the thesis. His presentation of Whitehead's thought allowed me to see the richness of process metaphysics, and his practical implementation of Whitehead's ideas in the classroom demonstrated their enormous potential for enhancing the learning situation in so many ways. This both sparked an excitement and sustained my interest in the explorations of Whitehead's philosophy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 3

1. General Context 3
2. Specific Thrust of Inquiry 5
3. Structure of Inquiry 6
4. Delimitations 10
    a. Of context 10
    b. Of terms 11

II. CENTRAL PHILOSOPHICAL TENETS OF TRADITIONAL AND PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION 16

A. Traditional Education 17

1. Epistemological issues 21
    a. Nature of mind 21
    b. Nature of knowledge 28
2. Notion of truth 31
3. Notion of progress 36
4. Meaning and significance of experience . . . 39
5. Nature of man 42

B. Progressive Education 44

1. Philosophical roots 46
    a. "Becoming" 46
    b. Pragmatism 47
    c. Naturalism 49
2. Notion of experience 52
3. Autonomy 57
4. Notion of values 59
5. Notion of progress 61

C. Elements of the Dialectic of Traditional and Progressive Education 63

III. EXPLORING VARIOUS APPROACHES TO THE CONFLICT . . . 71

A. Dewey 75

B. Maritain 81

C. Crowe and Lonergan 86

D. Summary 91

IV. THE WHITEHEADIAN APPROACH 94

Delimitations of the Whiteheadian Approach . 96
    a. Of focus 96
    b. Of structure 97

IV. (Cont.)

A. Educational Concerns of a Practical Nature . . . 98

- 1. The general nature of curriculum 98
- 2. The classics in education 101
- 3. Freedom and discipline 104

B. Educational Theory 107

- 1. The rhythm of education 108
- 2. The religious quality of education 119
- 3. Inert ideas 123
- 4. Soul murder 127

C. Whiteheadian Metaphysics Having Implications for Educational Philosophy 133

- 1. The general approach 134
  - a. Reality from a Whiteheadian perspective 135
  - b. A broadened pragmatism 138
- 2. Cosmology 140
  - a. Bipolarity of prehension 141
  - b. Whiteheadian philosophy of mind . . . 147
- 3. Nature of man 153
  - a. General account of the nature of man 154
  - b. Notion of experience and valuation . 156
  - c. Human progress and creativity 161
- 4. Summation 164

V. CONCLUSION 166

- 1. Overview of the general structure of the discussion 168
- 2. The approach as a framework 171

BIBLIOGRAPHY 176

I. INTRODUCTION

1. General Context

Contemporary thought on education continues to exhibit evidence of the longstanding conflict between proponents of what may be generally termed traditional and progressive education. The immensely popular and deeply controversial manifesto of E.D. Hirsch, Jr., Cultural Literacy, What Every American Needs to Know, draws attention yet again to trenchantly divided schools of thought concerning pedagogical practices and curriculum content. Hirsch believes the primary aim of schooling to be the student's acquisition of a high level of literacy by becoming acquainted with a vast background of information enabling one to understand literary works, newspapers and other communications, and relate these items of information to the unstated context of one's life.[1] Schools, he claims, have failed for the most part to attain this aim, and the cause of the failure lies in faulty educational theories which guide the learning process.[2] Hirsch traces one of the primary causes of this failure to the 1918 report, Cardinal Principles of Education, said to be inspired by John Dewey, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and William Wordsworth. Hirsch believes the report's underlying assumption that "a child's positive self-concept is the true key to learning" is a reversal of an earlier view advanced in the 1893 Report of the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies which maintains that the key to learning is found in training the mind, and such training is accomplished through rigorous studies in a traditional humanistic curriculum, supplemented and brought up-to-date by a new emphasis on the natural sciences.[3] For Hirsch, cultural illiteracy has been the fruit of the 1918 report, and although a humanistic curriculum does not guarantee literacy, flooding students' minds with a coherent and comprehensive body of basic information about past and present culture will result in their appropriation of a core body of knowledge enabling students to dissipate ignorance and incompetence.[4] However moot may be Hirsch's proposal, his manifesto in any case depicts educational theory in conflict.[5]

---

[1] E.D. Hirsch, Jr., Cultural Literacy, What Every American Needs to Know (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), pp. 2-3.

[2] Ibid., p. 110. This is also the basic contention of Allan Bloom, The Closing of the American Mind. How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).

Much of current thought on education decries the progressive theories advanced in the 1920's and implemented on a wide scale in the 1960's.[6] The present tide of thinking represented in Hirsch, Bloom and others envisages a return to a more traditional mode of teaching which emphasizes intellectual development and the acquisition of information. This most recent trend seems to parallel an earlier emphasis appearing in the 1950's which championed a move away from progressive to more traditional education. Now is the contemporary move "back-to-basics", like the educational trend of the fifties, to be followed by another resurgence in popularity of progressive modes of education? And is this pendular swing from one to the other the mere reactionary lot of educational theory? Can thought on education (and herein lies the central motivating question of this inquiry) overcome the conflictual oscillation? And if so, how?

---

[3] Ibid., pp. 110-125.

[4] Ibid., pp. 126-7.

[5] Further examples of conflict in education due to differing theories and philosophies readily appear in books, newspaper editorials and magazine articles, such as the polemic of D.J. Bercuson, R. Bothwell and J.L. Granatstein, The Great Brain Robbery. Canada's Universities on the Road to Ruin (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1984), and Ted Byfield's support of a British return to traditional education in "Why Educator's Deplore that Awful Woman from Britain", Alberta Report. Northern Edition. Vol. 15, No. 41 (September 26, 1988), 44.

2. Specific Thrust of Inquiry

It is my contention that the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, applied to questions of importance to education, provides a means of overcoming the conflict that has existed and currently persists in educational practice, theory and philosophy. This is accomplished by treating conflicting positions and counter-positions as elements in a dialectic,[7] and not as opposing views which must be wholly accepted or rejected. The especially appealing feature of Whitehead's philosophy of organism is its ability to encompass opposite and conflictual elements, and to regard them as integral components of reality. It offers useful insights into the nature of polarities and their interplay which is basic to all things that compose the existent universe. Certain differences and conflicting philosophical tenets are presented in the present study as elements of a dialectic in educational thinking. With reference to some of Whitehead's views on educational issues, and by using some of his key philosophical notions and concepts, those elements can be interconnected, and in large measure unified. Important philosophical tenets associated with traditional education, and those associated with progressive education, understood from a Whiteheadian perspective, depict complementary insights on the whole range of educational experiences encountered at various moments in an individual's development. These different tenets, I believe, are necessary to produce a more comprehensive and balanced view of human education. Furthermore, it is this Whiteheadian approach to the dialectic which can reduce the destructive tension between the two general theories of education, overcome the existing dogmatism and mutual denigration, and ultimately halt the pendular shifts from traditional education to progressive.

---

[6] Byfield, 44, and Hirsch, pp. 116-7.

[7] The special meaning of the term "dialectic" will be discussed in due course.

3. Structure of Inquiry

This account of a Whiteheadian approach to the conflict existing between traditional and progressive education, following an introductory chapter, will unfold in four subsequent sections. Chapters two and three establish the context for the fourth chapter that deals explicitly with the Whiteheadian approach to the problem. A concluding chapter summarizes the tenor and especially attractive features of the approach.

Chapter two, then, deals with some of the fundamental questions associated with traditional and progressive education, and serves to define in general terms what is commonly meant by these two modes of education. Although a precise canon of belief associated with each educational philosophy cannot account for its myriad of forms, the philosophical assertions and tenets as delineated engender a sense of what both are about, and how they differ. The differences are emphasized in a final portion of the chapter that juxtaposes for purposes of clarity and contrast the fundamental tenets of traditional and progressive education.

The third chapter briefly discusses attempts of other thinkers to deal with this pervasive educational conflict. A simple overview of a few psychologically-based and sociologically-based studies shows that they pinpoint some of the primary differences and sources of conflict between traditional and progressive education, but do little to resolve the conflict. A more satisfying treatment may be found in philosophically-based inquiries, since philosophical analyses broach more fundamental questions, such as those pertaining to the nature of human experience, what it means to be human, the development of intellectual thought, and related issues. The works of John Dewey, Jacques Maritain, and the Jesuit theologian and philosopher, Frederick Crowe, address directly the problem of conflict between traditional and progressive education, but although they deal with philosophical issues, each approach, I believe, remains limited by its proclivities to one or the other mode of educational philosophy, or limited by a focus on only one or two aspects of philosophical difference. In light of these attempts to deal with the conflict, the Whiteheadian approach seems to offer a more adequate treatment by providing a more comprehensive and penetrating analysis.

The fourth chapter presents an approach to the conflict based on the thought of Whitehead. This approach deals with the conflict as dialectic, and to a large extent overcomes the destructive tension between opposing philosophical views by regarding polarities as constitutive of all actual instances of existence. The Whiteheadian approach to the dialectic of traditional and progressive education encompasses a broad range of educational issues, and the proposed unification of educational thought is discussed as it pertains to practical concerns, theoretical issues and philosophical questions. The link between traditional and progressive education arises from insights offered in Whitehead's metaphysics centred on an accounting of the present moment of experience and the dynamics of the components involved.

Chapter five, the concluding chapter that serves as an apologia, delineates the especially attractive and compelling features of the Whiteheadian approach. The approach is shown to be essentially a framework, an outline, tentative in its propositions and general in its orientation. Some of the details of this approach and its general character come into view as specific educational problems and questions are related to the framework. Dealing with these problems and questions as elements of a dialectic demonstrates how the gulf between these conflicting theories and philosophies can be spanned and how a unity of educational thinking can be accomplished. The linkage does not merely entail a selection of ideas that are compatible with Whitehead's philosophy. It is more, for it is rooted in a grand metaphysical conception of existence that envelops important aspects of both educational theories and philosophies. And it is this metaphysical grounding that allows for differences and conflict to be seen not as an occasion for an entrenchment of views leading to schisms and fragmentation, but to be perceived as dialectic, that is, as an opportunity for expanding one's view of existence and enlarging the horizon of desirable, valuable experiences.

4. Delimitations

a. Of context

The general scope of this study encompasses many dimensions of historic and contemporary educational thought and practice. What aspects of education cannot be related in some way to the concerns of traditional and progressive educational theory? A narrower, more manageable scope for this study concerns the specific problem of the conflict between the two modes of education, and how the philosophy of Whitehead and the insights of those who draw on his thinking, can enlarge one's understanding of educational experience and promote some manner of a unified theory of education. However, even this narrower focus is too broad for the present inquiry, since such a treatment of the problem cannot be comprehensive of all, or even of most issues pertaining to educational practice, theory and philosophy in conflict. Neither a Whiteheadian manual of pedagogy, nor a full-blown educational theory, nor a thoroughgoing philosophy of education can be offered here which together might constitute such a treatment. Rather, the objective is to present an approach to the problem of conflicting educational theories, an approach that comes into view when but a sample of some important educational questions are considered. Although the primary work of the present study is philosophical in nature, insofar as philosophy relates to the concrete world, practical issues are addressed in order to illustrate the implications of a

Whiteheadian approach. And some issues pertaining to educational theory are dealt with where they have been considered by Whitehead himself, or by scholars applying his thought. But the bulk of the work is devoted to philosophical issues, namely delineating those issues important to educational philosophy, and suggesting how a Whiteheadian treatment of those issues unify conflicting positions of traditionalists and progressivists.

b. Of terms

The general context concerns traditional and progressive education. A concise definition of these two modes of education cannot adequately capture their multi-faceted, myriad expressions, as both traditional education and progressive education exhibit wide diversity on many basic questions pertaining to educational practice, theory and philosophy. In lieu of a strict definition, general philosophical tenets associated with both modes of education are delineated, and thus it is expected that a clear sense of each will come into view.

The specific context concerns the conflict between educational philosophies -- conflict that is treated from a Whiteheadian perspective as dialectic. The philosophical origins of the notion of dialectic may be traced to the paradoxes of Zeno and the early Greek Eleatic philosophy of the fifth century B.C. The development of philosophical thinking since then discloses a great variety of meaning associated with the term, ranging from mere conversation, to logical reasoning, to the specialized senses of dialectic in various versions of philosophical idealism.[8] Hegel, for example, like other philosophers such as Fichte, Schelling and Schleiermacher who appreciated Kant's rediscovery of dialectic, understood opposed hypotheses and contradictions involved in the rational thinking process as positive and necessary for the development of thought. Hegel viewed dialectic as essentially following the course of the hermeneutical circle, that being a pattern of inquiry achieving ever greater degrees of understanding through the "conversation" between a concept and the thinking about the concept.[9] It is this sense of dialectic which will be utilized in the present inquiry -- the sense of valuing and utilizing conflicting ideas to produce a fuller understanding of human experiences -- to provide the key to the proposed unificaton.

Hans-Georg Gadamer, in showing the hermeneutical importance of dialectic, states that dialectic is the art of carrying on a conversation, and achieving an understanding and agreement concerning conflicting matters.[10] The conversation engaged in this study deals with the philosophical tenets associated with traditional and progressive education, and reflects a **Whiteheadian** systematic cosmology whose metaphysical categories, I suggest, comprise a philosophical base able to facilitate a resolution to the conflict. The dialectic is not a synthesis of thesis and antithesis that is reached by merely selecting some appealing ideas and rejecting others. Rather, it is accommodating otherwise conflicting viewpoints especially important to education within a broadened understanding of existence. Simply stated, the special sense of dialectic employed here seeks an integration of ideas.

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[8] Ronald Hall, "Dialectic," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Vol. 2, edited by Paul Edwards (New York: The Macmillan Publishing Company, 1967), p. 385.

[9] Hans-Georg Gadamer, Hegel's Dialectic. Five Hermeneutical Studies, translated by P. Christopher Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 9.

Unlike dialectic, the notion of experience carries with it no specialized meaning in this study. For the most part, the meaning of the term avoids the empiricist-rationalist dispute, and regards experience as inclusive of the sensory awareness of the world, the conceptual accounting of reality, and all elements composing human existence.[11] That is to say, experience is a term generally encompassing all aspects of life apparent in the realm of individual awareness. It is the objective of this inquiry to augment an awareness of human experience by expanding one's understanding of human educational experiences, especially through discovery of a unity among important aspects of both traditional and progressive education.

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[10] Gadamer, Philosophical Apprenticeships, translated by Robert R. Sullivan (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1985), p. 186.

[11] P. L. Heath, "Experience," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Vol. 3, edited by Paul Edwards (New York: The Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, 1967), pp. 156-8.

A final distinction should be drawn between the use of the terms educational practice, educational theory and educational philosophy. Although the primary focus is on educational philosophy, some aspects of educational theory and practice are addressed in order to acquire a sense of the breadth of a Whiteheadian approach to the dialectic. Educational practice concerns the issues related to schooling, such as the student-teacher relationships, and questions concerning subject matter taught. Educational theory is more abstract in that it attempts to establish principles and methods which can guide education toward practical objectives. While educational philosophy, at least as I utilized the term, displays some of the qualities of educational theory, being abstract and concerned with principles of education, its special interest centers on the relationship between educational issues and the fundamental questions of human life and the general nature of existence. Where matters of educational theory and practice arise, the intention is to reflect Whiteheadian philosophical thought, which, it is argued, holds the key to effectively dealing with the conflict between traditional and progressive education.

With these delimiters in place, there emerges the first important task: to identify and distinguish the major elements of the conflict.

II. CENTRAL PHILOSOPHICAL TENETS OF TRADITIONAL AND PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION

A unification of the distinctive philosophical views associated with "traditional" and "progressive" education begins with some understanding of the major tenets of these two educational perspectives. This chapter will briefly distinguish and discuss certain basic philosophical beliefs of, first, traditional education, and then those of progressive education. A summary in a third part will compare and contrast the various positions that have been identified, and thus the context will be framed for depicting an approach to education that utilizes the insights of Whitehead to overcome the considerable distance that now separates traditional and progressive education on a philosophical level.

However relevant may be an exposition of pedagogical practices for a comprehensive understanding of traditional and progressive education, the focus here will be limited to the basic philosophical tenets associated with both perspectives.[1] The present chapter is further limited to a concise treatment of these major philosophical tenets; a detailed, critical analysis and appraisal would take this work considerably beyond the specific scope of investigating the conflict between traditional and progressive education. Identifying and understanding the fundamental philosophical tenets should be sufficient to grasp the depth and nature of the conflict between these two types of educational perspectives and, more importantly, to delineate the elements of central importance to the existing conflict. As particular philosophical notions are discussed, it is expected that the basic postures of both traditional and progressive educational philosophies will come into view, and the essential thrust of each be clearly established.

---

[1] Cf. Charles J. Brauner and Hobert Burns, Problems in Education and Philosophy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 7-11. A distinction may be drawn between a philosophical notion and other ideas which are involved in these two approaches to education. Here Brauner and Burns indicate what may be a domain which can be thought of as philosophical. Such includes metaphysics (the theory of reality), axiology (the theory of value), and epistemology (the theory of knowledge). For my purposes, a philosophical notion will pertain to ideas commonly associated with any of these philosophical categories.

A. Traditional Education

Only a variety of terms and relations, and no one, single definition can appropriately depict the basic features of educational philosophy conceived under the broad rubric, "traditional."[2] John Paul Strain, in his anthology of educational philosophies, terms "essentialism" as one major type of traditionalist theory, whose proponents, it is said, largely react to what they regard as the excesses of progressive education. They emphasize a return to a core curriculum of reading, writing and arithmetic. This view sees the function of education to be the gaining of information and the learning of basic employment skills. Strain suggests that the thinking underlying traditional education represents the kind of philosophical idealism which values intellectual, formal knowledge over experience-centred learning; ideas are emphasized more than feeling and doing. This emphasis stems from the longstanding belief that "acceptable and adequate" experience depends on the acquisition of knowledge.[3] The roots of traditional education have been traced to the patristic and medieval periods of Western civilization, when emerged a standardized curriculum composed of the trivium and quadrivium that represent the seven liberal arts which have come to be regarded as the basic subject matter for "liberal education." John Cardinal Newman described more modern manifestations of liberal education as "the cultivation of the intellect ... and its object is nothing more or less than intellectual excellence."[4] Thus he associates liberal education with important features of traditional education, an association that in this century is now commonplace.[5] Besides this association with liberal education, traditional education has been connected with other types of education. For example, "general education" has also been used in describing a traditional mode of education, notably in the Harvard Committee's report, General Education in a Free Society, and by the Canadian educator, Hilda Neatby.[6] Another incarnation of traditionalist education, now exerting considerable influence, appears as the "back-to-basics" movement with its various agendas.[7]

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[2] Here is discussed merely a representative sampling of the views of a few key thinkers espousing some fundamental perspectives of the traditional approach to education.

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[3] Modern Philosophies of Education, edited by John Paul Strain (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 13.

[4] Brauner and Burns, p. 27.

[5] Cf. Hilda Neatby, So Little for the Mind (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co., 1953), pp. 239ff. and Jacques Maritain, Education at the Crossroads (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1943), pp. 58ff.

By traditionalist education, then, is meant that perspective which, identified by various names, mainly emphasizes established and formalized knowledge and ability in the area of intellectual comprehension. Although traditional education encompasses a variety of pedagogical practices and curriculum programs, common philosophical threads tie this thinking together and best exhibit its fundamentally distinctive and essential set of beliefs.[8]

Two foci have persisted in Western philosophical thinking since the time of the early Greeks: one on the pervasiveness of change as evidenced in the vicissitudes of daily life, and the other on the permanent, absolute, unchanging elements of the cosmos.[9] By and large, educational philosophies may be seen to espouse to some extent one focus or the other, along with its concomitant philosophical descriptions. Progressive education tends to see change as the most fundamental characteristic of existence, while the changeless, absolute, eternal elements of existence are basic to the views of traditional education. The question at the heart of the matter here concerns whether "becoming" or "being" is the predominant philosophical consideration. Historically, the question of being has dominated Western thought, and consequently, a traditionalist education has generally received widest acceptance overall. The most elaborate expression of this type of philosophical thinking is found in German Idealism associated with Immanuel Kant and, later, G. F. W. Hegel. Drawing on the Newtonian hypothesis of absolute and eternal laws, Hegel developed a system of thought extending the nomological ordering of nature to the realms of history, theology and the human spirit. He maintained that the natural, physical world is but an external depiction of an inherent order based on absolute laws.[10] Traditional education reflects in various ways this structure of being, particularly by its recognition of a religious or transcendent realm from which the natural world with its social structures is governed. It is from this type of metaphysical description of existence that particular philosophical tenets associated with traditional education follow.

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[6] Neatby, p. 18.

[7] J. Donald Wilson, "From the Swinging Sixties to the Sobering Seventies." Education in Canada. An Interpretation, edited by E. Brian Titley and Peter J. Miller (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1982), pp. 204 and 206.

[8] It would be a mistake to suggest that liberal education, general education, and the back-to-basics movement are one and the same. They do, however, share similar educational orientations that can all be termed "traditional."

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[9] Charles Hartshorne, "The Development of Process Philosophy," Process Theology, edited by Ewert H. Cousins (New York: Newman Press, 1971), pp. 47-66.

[10] Strain, p. 126

1. Epistemological issues

a. Nature of mind

An explication of the nature of mind is of central importance to the philosophy underlying traditional education since the preeminent concern in this mode of education centres on the development of the intellectual capacities of human beings. Whether knowledge is grasped by rational thought alone, or results when intuition pertaining to spacio-temporal relations comes into play (as with Kant), or is ultimately attained by grasping absolute principles and laws governing all of reality (Hegel),[11] knowledge comes by way of some level of intellectual development and skill. For this type of thinking, the philosophy of Johann Friedrich Herbart has been singled out as representative of its educational implications. John Dewey, for one, actually regards Herbart as the father of traditional education insofar as he established the philosophical foundations for an education consisting largely of mental formation.[12] It has been further recognized that Herbart's influence has extended to some important educational theorists of the last century, including J.H. Pestalozzi and Friedrich Nietzsche.[13]

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[11] H. B. Acton, "Idealism," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Volume 4, edited by Paul Edwards (New York: The Macmillan Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 113-5.

[12] John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Free Press, 1966).

For Herbart, knowledge of the world depends on a grasp of a complex system of cogent, internally consistent propositions which, in part, constitute the entities of reality, or what he call the "reals." These entities, both material and conceptual, struggle for self-preservation and compete for prominence. Mental life consists of such a struggle and competition among ideas, where less successful ideas are relegated to the status of mere impulses on a subconscious level, and the successful ones emerge as concepts that are grasped consciously.[14] In having the interplay and competition among concepts and ideas figure prominently in his educational philosophy, the objective of education for Herbart becomes centered on the guidance of students through the configurations of competing ideas in order to enlarge their circle of thought and develop a diversity of interest.[15] His philosophy of mind takes as its special focus the function of the human will in relation to the realms of aesthetics and ethics.

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[13] Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy: Volume 7, Modern Philosophy, Part II, Schopenhauer to Nietzsche (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), p. 18.

[14] Ibid, pp. 14-6.

[15] Harold B. Dunkel, "Herbart, Johann Friedrich," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Volume 3, edited by Paul Edwards (New York: The Macmillan Publishing Company, 1967), p. 484.

The will is expressed through judgments of approval and disapproval in matters of taste and questions related to the ideals of inner freedom, perfection, benevolence, justice and retribution. Herbart's educational philosophy, adopting these ideals (with their Herbartian meanings), becomes essentially a prescription for character development. The function of education is to promote and ensure moral living, and educators ought to encourage the student to make decisions which will exhibit these moral ideals.[16] An epithet has been suggested of Herbart's educational views: "To instruct a person is to construct him," and since ideas compete for prominence in a person's consciousness, it was thought that the construction process, supportive of that goal to achieve the moral life required of an educator a large measure of control over the student's experiences in order that morally good ideas flourish and ethically correct judgments abound.[17] A philosophy of mind such as this inspires much of modern traditional educational thinking that emphasizes the formation of mind and thought, and whose final goal is a high level of moral and intellectual stature displaying the loftiest of ideals esteemed by society.

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[16] Copleston, History of Philosophy, Volume 7, Part II, pp. 17-8.

[17] Kingsley Price, "Philosophy of Education, History of," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Volume 6, edited by Paul Edwards, (New York: The Macmillan Publishing Company, 1967), p. 239.

Unlikely support for Herbart's educational theory appears in Nietzsche's work, despite the underlying differences between Herbart's philosophical tradition and Nietzsche's brand of atheistic existentialism. Their common ground concerns a similar importance assigned to the "cultivation" of the human will. For Nietzsche, the will is a central force in the biological struggle for survival, while for Herbart it concerns the ability to evaluate concepts and to make judgments of high moral virtue. Although Herbart's notion of the will pertains primarily to the realm of ideas, and Nietzsche's an exploration of its meaning for biological survival, Nietzsche cites approvingly Herbart's attempt to establish principles or laws governing aesthetic judgments, since such laws demand of the will a certain perspicaciousness and conviction that is beyond mere affective whims or fancies.[18] A will that exhibits decisiveness and power produces the needed strength of character to survive and prevail in the struggle of life. Extending the implications of this, Nietzsche's notion of education allows only for "stern demands" to be placed on the student, as well as a good measure of discipline that imbibes in him a tough and resolute will to live.[19] Testing and developing will-power should be the supreme purpose of education,[20] and the educator, to achieve this end, "must be capable of employing every means of discipline: some [students] he can drive towards heights only with whips of scorn; others, who are sluggish, irresolute, cowardly, vain, perhaps only with exaggerated praise."[21] No doubt his view has pushed to the extreme the educational interest in cultivating and strengthening the will in order to attain certain objectives, and likely engages a philosophy of mind too radical to be accepted within commonly practiced modes of traditional education. Nevertheless, this type of thinking falls within a traditionalist genre, and together with the Herbartian emphasis on cultural refinements and spiritual sensitivities stemming from religious compunctions of conscience and a desire for love and benevolence, depicts a range of thought which sees the training of the will to be of utmost importance.

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[18] Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), pp. 440-1.

[19] Ibid., p. 482.

These initial considerations pertaining to resoluteness of the will, and mental concentration lead to another common theme among traditionalists, that being the larger issue of the nature of intellectual development. Dewey describes traditionalists as expecting the will to be so trained as to allow for acceptable ideas, or "presentations," to have prominence in one's consciousness, and when these presentations acquire certain arrangements and relations, patterns emerge which can be reinforced through memorization and other pedagogical exercises.[22] The old adage is held as a truism, "repetition is the mother of learning," (repetitio est mater studiorum). The mind exercised in this manner creates among students not only the willingness to conform to expected patterns of behaviour, but to establish certain thought processes so as to develop intellectual abilities for grasping a prescribed body of knowledge presented in the classroom. Of traditional education, Dewey suggests, "the attitude of pupils must, upon the whole, be one of docility, receptivity and obedience."[23] If this may be too general and pejorative a characterization, a more moderate description is given by Harold Dunkel: educating the mind involves a "banking" process where (reminiscent of John Locke's tabula rasa) the mind receives stimuli that are deposited clearly and distinctly. It is thought these stimuli, in turn, produce ideas that, if strong enough, dominate one's thinking and govern one's life.[24]

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[20] Ibid., p. 484.

[21] Ibid., pp. 512-3.

A recent expression of a philosophy of mind associated with a traditional view of education may be found in Paul Hirst's writings on liberal education. The origins of this type of education he traces to the Hellenistic practice of educating free men rather than slaves. Hirst explains that the "liberating" aspect of liberal education came to be seen as an exercising of the mind that has the capacity to freely engage in rational thought, to become emancipated from common error in thinking, and to concretely exhibit behaviour largely devoid of wrongful acts.[25] Western civilization, in its patristic and medieval periods, saw the development of a standardized curriculum to achieve these ends. This basic curriculum, composed of the trivium and quadrivium, mentioned earlier as related to the seven subject specializations of liberal education, promoted intellectual development and the acquisition of propositional knowledge. To be sure, Hirst would not advocate an atavistic turn in education, since his defence of liberal education rests upon its emancipation from classical, and certainly medieval, metaphysical assumptions.[26] Contemporary liberal education, to chart its new course, should distinguish for study purposes the main "forms" of current knowledge. These forms of knowledge involve unique and discrete ways of understanding human experience which result in ever sharper, ever finer intellectual grasps of the various elements of experience. Accordingly, the human mind is able to differentiate and understand a great variety of experiences as they are related to various conceptual schema associated with particular forms.[27] Education suited to this view of knowledge requires of the mind training in order to understand and utilize the forms of knowledge that make meaningful, and structurally order, one's life. (Hirst does admit, however, that liberal education must be balanced by some emphasis on character development, physical education, and a certain degree of specialization.)[28] Although he, and others supporting contemporary traditional education,[29] avoid the solitary emphasis on intellectual development typical of earlier expressions of liberal education, by taking into account the importance of experience replete with affective and axiological elements, the basic philosophy of education advanced by these proponents still elevates to preeminence the development of intellectual and conceptual capacities.

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[22] Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 69-80.

[23] John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: Collier Books, 1963), p. 18.

[24] Dunkel, p. 481.

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[25] Paul Hirst, "Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge," Education and the Development of Reason, edited by R.F. Dearden, P.H. Hirst and R.S. Peters (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 393.

[26] Ibid., pp. 402-3.

b. Nature of knowledge

The nature of knowledge set forth in traditional theories of education may be seen as an extention to the basic assertions of the philosophy of mind. Ruric Roark, a prominent educator and theorist of the late nineteenth century, for example, refers to what can be thought of as an isomorphism between knowledge and the knowing process. Knowledge is the "material" that is embedded in textbooks, extracted through the educational process, and situated in the fertile mind made receptive through discipline and training.[30] The mind, as such, has innate capacity to receive and store information. Where knowledge may be regarded as bodies of information that can exist independently from the mind in various documents posited as the literature of a society or civilization with its arts, its scientific hypotheses and mathematical formulae, the human mind exhibits a capacity to investigate, understand and evaluate those repositories of knowledge. Of course, questions could be raised as to whether knowledge is knowledge without its being known by a knower (documents may be regarded merely as ink marks on white pages and not as knowledge per se), but overlooking or rejecting this, Roark and other traditionalists generally would agree that knowledge is commonly "housed" in written language, and awaiting entry into inquiring minds.

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[27] Ibid., P. 402.

[28] Ibid., p. 412.

[29] Ibid., pp. 413-4.

This epistemological viewpoint supports the notion that knowledge can be "transmitted" from one repository (whether a textbook or a mind of a teacher) to another (the mind of the student) -- precisely the contention of R. M. Hutchins who regards this transmission to be the main function of education. For Hutchins, there exists in some fields of study "certain and clear knowledge" which is epistemologically superior to other subject areas dealing primarily with opinion and conjecture. These superior fields of inquiry should take priority in the school curriculum.

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[30] Ruric Roark, "Philosophy in Education," Modern Philosophies of Education, edited by John Paul Strain (New York: Random House, 1971), pp. 149-50.

> There must be some certain, clear knowledge. If there is knowledge, it should be taught as such, and it should be taught first...Where we have certainty, let us teach in accordance with the weight of evidence, giving our doctrine such probability as can be found for it by appropriate arguments.[31]

The objective of teaching is the grasp of certain and clear knowledge, and is achieved by identifying and packaging this commodity for the student, and delivering it in such a manner which ensures that knowledge will be soundly lodged in the receptive mind. Education is thus the guardian and vendor of past treasures of knowledge, and if educators do not transmit the "accumulated wisdom of the race," they have failed in their fundamental purpose.[32]

Similar epistemological assumptions underlie Neatby's lament over the abysmal state of education in the mid-twentieth century. Education is anti-intellectual because a body of factual statements, composing the substance of thought, is not adequately conveyed; it is anti-cultural since knowledge of our past traditions is lost to those students subjected to a progressive education; it is amoral because knowledge of right and wrong has been clouded by a relativistic morality.[33] However engaging and exiting may be the peripheral interests in physical education, and pursuing and developing personal talents, the supreme goal of education, according to Neatby, must now be to preempt mental starvation and ameliorate this impoverished condition by providing factual data for the mind.

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[31] Robert M Hutchins, "A Reply to Professor Whitehead," in Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 158 (November, 1936), 588.

[32] Ibid., 585.

[33] Neatby, pp. 15-7.

In general, proponents of traditional education exhibit some shared epistemological concerns, however widely they may differ on other major questions (such as those pertaining to basic metaphysical propositions.) The purpose of education is to develop the capacities of the mind, including conditioning the will as one aspect of the mind, and to understand and assent to the body of knowledge which has formed and guided civilized life in the Western world. Education attains this goal when knowledge is transmitted from teacher to student, and from one generation to the next. Now from this broad epistemological base arise other philosophical topics important to traditional education.

2. Notion of truth

Truth, as a philosophical notion, is a crucial consideration in the philosophy of traditional education, for it could be suggested that the main business of education is truth. According to a traditionalist perspective, important truths are to be grasped by a well-developed intellect. Generally, it is held by traditionalists that truth, from a privileged transcendent realm beyond the uncertainties of daily human living, supplies human understanding with a normative canon of facts about all aspects of existence. This type of truth is seen as an absolute, immutable "God's eye" view of the way things actually exist,[34] and which, in its relation to a traditional education, provides all educated persons with a basis for certitude in knowledge and conduct of life.

Although Hegel is not a philosopher of education per se, his insights on truth inspire much traditionalist thinking. With Hegel, truth in its "highest" form is "Absolute", and is encountered within what he describes as a religious-philosophical realm of consciousness. But before such an encounter and grasp of ultimate truth is attained, truth is grappled with, first, on the lowest level where sensible objects are set against the one who is conscious of them, then, on the next level in terms of a self-consciousness that generates an awareness of oneself in relation to other persons. Finally, on the highest level, there emerges the possibility for a grasp of truth comprised primarily of answers to religious and philosophical questions striving to express "Absolute Knowledge."[35] Hegel substantiates his claim that consciousness develops toward and eventually grasps ultimate truth by outlining the development of history which has culminated in the Age of Reason that, at least as one of its characteristic features, sees truth as rational reflection on the primary doctrines of the Christian religion.[36] Hegel's absolute sense of truth has a corollary in a religiously-based moral imperative, which we can see in the demands of T. S. Eliot and Neatby that education result in ethical and moral sensibilities due upstanding members of civilized society.

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[34] Strain, pp. 126-7.

[35] Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy: Volume 7, Modern Philosophy, Part I: Fichte to Hegel (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), pp. 223-5.

Being an important influence in recent educational thinking, evidenced by his inclusion in anthologies such as Strain's on educational philosophy,[37] T. S. Eliot resolutely affirms basic axioms of traditional education and strongly protests progressivist tendencies. This is seen, in part, in his asseveration that education is really a matter of religious education. For Eliot the vital issue is not "the place of religion in education, but the place of education in religion,"[38] religion being the broader, far more weighty concern. Here his basic sense of religious education is a concomitant of an absolute, transcendent realm where truth reflects that which is ultimately Good, and can be revealed concretely in the judgments of right and wrong as they have been expressed by the sages and seminal thinkers of the past. Truth, for Eliot, is essentially embodied in the Christian faith, and it is the mission of educators to bring students to understand and accept its truths. Although even kindred spirits of Eliot find this view somewhat narrow and extreme, being reticent to accept wholly his sectarian polemics, they all, however, favour a notion of truth that emanates from a universal, transcendent, immutable realm of existence.[39] For Eliot, intellectually grasping truth, and ordering the experiences of life so they harmoniously blossom forth in goodness and righteousness, comprise the great achievements of education.

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[36] G. W. F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, translated by J. B. Baillie (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1967), pp. 750ff, especially pp. 761-3.

[37] T. S. Eliot, "The Aims of Education," Modern Philosophies of Education, edited by John Paul Strain (New York: Random House, 1971), pp. 407-11.

[38] Ibid., p. 415.

In her attempt to offer a more moderate traditionalist perception of education, Neatby invokes a notion of truth grounding a canon of acceptable and desirable behaviour. Moral discipline and training, she believes, must be founded on clear religious principles and convictions.[40] These principles and convictions constitute moral truth, and should be instilled as social rules and norms so when the child has aged and can maturely re-examine these truths, they will be reaffirmed by that individual.[41] For Neatby, the importance of absolute truth has relevance to more than just moral concerns. Quite apart from the development of character, there is the question of whether one achieves complete development of intellect if a person's understanding is not directed to something transcendent.[42] This added provision for intellectual development thus depends upon the grasping of religious truth, and with this, Neatby's traditional education exhibits two main purposes -- to produce character of strong moral fibre, and to achieve intellectual stature that is centred and dependent upon immutable, transcendent truth.

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[39] Neatby, pp. 240-43.

[40] Ibid., p. 230.

[41] Ibid., pp. 330-1.

Traditional education, however, is not limited to a notion of truth dependent solely upon a metaphysical conception of the Absolute. Hirst's recent work seeks to establish a foundation for truth in public criteria which can be used as a measure to determine what, in a specific instance, is in fact true. Because of the way knowledge is grasped, he argues, and truth so grasped as a manifestation of knowledge, a conceptual schema can be shared by persons searching for and achieving knowledge according to a particular form (whether logical, empirical, moral or aesthetic).[43] Hirst rejects the concept of truth associated with that traditional mode of education which involves a correspondence between "objective" knowledge and mind,[44] and which sees truth dependent upon an affirmation of metaphysical precepts. Rather, truth depends upon public criteria stemming from this shared conceptual schema "whereby the true is distinguishable from the false, the good from the bad, the right from the wrong."[45] Consequently, understanding truth is a matter of understanding the various types of expressed knowledge, and not simply assenting to "religious" propositions. Despite Hirst's attempted departure from the notion of truth held by Eliot and Neatby, an element remains common, that truth is a matter of intellectual comprehension and involves clearly formulated concepts affecting the affairs and concerns of mankind. And if truth is the business of education, these traditionalists see education's aim to be the training of the mind to grasp those truths which then form the basis for understanding all other aspects of reality.

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[42] Ibid., p. 331.

[43] Ibid., pp. 400-1.

[44] Ibid., pp. 402-3.

3. Notion of progress

Another key notion, that of progress, figures prominently in the philosophy of traditional education, and which to a large extent concerns the practical manifestation of its underlying metaphysics. It is not that progressive education promotes progress and traditional education opposes it. Rather, the matter concerns two distinct approaches to education which regard progress quite differently. The traditional idea of progress has been traced to a Christian response to the two predominant questions of Greek philosophical thinking, that of permanence and that of change. Charles Brauner and Hobert Burns explain that Christian theology initially conceived of change as the inexorable movement toward the end of history, when the eternal apocalyptic reign of God will be finally established. But with the secularization of thought resulting from the Enlightenment, and the emergence of scientific method, many religious doctrines were restated in terms of philosophical categories. These rearticulations, however, still upheld a belief in some final and fixed end to history, be that tied to a concept of a transcendent personality or Being or, more generally, to a permanent and absolute rule of law pervading the cosmos. In either case, whether of a Christian or a secularist viewpoint, the view of history involved a fixed terminus, and progress toward that finality was guaranteed by a power beyond and independent of human action. Brauner and Burns suggest this was the position of Hegel,[46] and find that this manner of thinking has influenced later proponents of traditional education like Mortimer Adler, who, in his "Defence of the Philosophy of Education," argues that all human beings for all time seek the same ultimate end of education.[47] Adler sees certain desirable educational theories and practices to be harmonious with and lead to "eternal verities and ultimate values." Thus education, which has as its basic thrust the preparation for living, remains essentially the same over time and across cultures.[48] Broadly stated then, progress is the movement toward an end where, in general outline, a universally accepted world order is realized.

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[45] _Ibid_., p. 404.

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[46] Brauner and Burns, p. 68.

[47] Ibid., p. 70.

[48] Ibid.

Other traditionalists offer similar views of progress. Hutchins, for one, in his acrid reply to Whitehead on university education, presents progress as clearly dependent upon a discernment of basic ideas which has survived over the ages, and which now constitute a body of "certain" knowledge.[49] Hutchins maintains that what is purported to be new today, if it is important and basic, was actually knowledge discovered in ages past, but now forgotten, because the classics and the liberal arts leading to that knowledge and whole tradition of learning have been largely neglected. The key to achieving progress rests upon a thorough acquaintance with the theory behind the practical and technical applications within a field of knowledge which, when grasped, can then propel students to new heights of learning and doing.[50] The world of theory and ideas, Hutchins thought, serves to inform and direct the practical affairs of persons and societies, and guide their progress and development.

Paul Hirst, in the same vein, sees progress in terms of the gradual accrual of a cognitive framework for understanding human experiences in their complex relations and ever finer distinctions.[51] Without such a cognitive framework, one's individual experiences (emotional, attitudinal, and suchlike) may have private significance, but they remain unintelligible to the broader, public world that is intellectually structured according to publicly accepted concepts. Progress is concerned with the erection of such structures, those edifices being regarded as the "fundamental achievement of mind."[52] Hirst, while departing from a notion of progress that envisages some absolute and transcendent end, yet appeals to a standard of public intelligibility in order to measure human achievement and progress. Hirst's idea of progress exhibits with other traditionalists a view that the realization of progress basically entails a type of intellectual insight and discernment, against which the details of individual and cultural life can be evaluated.

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[49] Hutchins, p. 585.

[50] Hutchins, P. 586.

[51] Hirst, p. 401.

4. Meaning and significance of experience

A more concrete expression of the philosophy of traditional education is found in its understanding of the nature of human experience. Generally, only progressive education is seen as the type purporting to be "experience oriented," but some strains of traditional education, too, place considerable emphasis on the role of one's own personal experience in education, rejecting, like progressivists, a preponderance of purely "textbook" knowledge. For example, Neatby's tirade against progressivist practices surprisingly includes a distinct and pronounced appreciation of personal experience, believing it to be a progenitive source of all knowledge. But since not all experience is conducive to the growth in knowledge considered educationally valuable, she argues, it is incumbent upon educators to lead students into those experiences which will engender certain habits and principles of thought leading to knowledge that will enable them eventually to become functioning adults within the norms and pervasive values of society. Such habits and principles promote and regulate the experiences of children so that they will be gradually introduced to the great variety of meaningful and reasoned experiences which compose adult life. Those experiences are both individual as well as collective, and together they constitute the life of a group and community. They eventually inform and compose the traditions of society. Neatby believes that another function of education is to bring a student to an understanding of these rich traditions, and have the student adopt them as his own.[53] Consequently, personal and group experiences are viewed as equally significant components of knowledge, inasmuch as those experiences conform to and adequately reflect the intellectually conceived norms or laws governing individual and societal life. Where one's experiences display this conformity, the "truths by which society has lived" are exemplified, and so is set forth the type of life to be mirrored by all educated persons.[54]

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[52] Ibid.

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[53] Neatby, p. 325.

Another traditional, but somewhat unique view of experience, is found in Hirst. For him, education involves the business of acquiring knowledge and achieving a self-conscious rational mind. A primary function of a rational mind is to order experience according to the conceptual schema related to various forms of knowledge.[55] This structuring employs symbols, terms and relations that distinguish and interrelate experiences, thereby bringing intelligibility to one's experiential world.[56] Personal experiences are both the _source_ of the conceptual framework that provides ever new possibilities for the creation and application of symbols, terms and relations, and also the _focus_ of education whose objective is the "achievement of mind," where the full range of human experiences becomes intelligible.[57] Whereas Neatby denigrates those experiences which do not conform to the great "truths" held by society, Hirst sees all experiences as educationally valid to the extent they become intelligible according to publicly established criteria, and thus come to exemplify a rational mind.

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[54] _Ibid_.

[55] _Ibid_.

[56] _Ibid_.

[57] _Ibid_., p. 401.

To both approaches, personal experiences, to be educationally significant, should be governed by certain ideas which, over time, have been deemed rationally acceptable by society in general.

5. Nature of man

Various issues discussed so far, such as those related to a philosophy of mind, the notion of truth, the nature of knowledge, the character of human progress and the significance of experience, are all directly related to a traditionalist view of the nature of man. Under the broad rubric "humanness," then, the overall thrust of traditional education finds succinct and summary expression. The views of various proponents with traditionalist sympathies on this specific topic will be briefly discussed.

For one, Hutchins closely interrelates humanness and the educational process. It is his esteemed liberal education with its emphasis on intellectual pursuits and achievements that he sees as best suited to the Western conception of man which regards rationality as the essence of humanness. Since, in the Western world, man is regarded as a rational animal, "an animal who seeks and attains his highest felicity through the exercise and perfection of this reason," being human generally involves an individual's development of abilities in the area of critical analysis and intellectual evaluation, where the primary objective is an acceptance of the Western intellectual tradition.[58]

A more refined, if somewhat restrictive view of humanness connected with traditional education appears in the philosophy of Michael Oakeshott. Individuals, he maintains, become fully human only when they mature and become fully participatory in the "conversation" characteristic of human community. He explains, "[Conversation] is an unrehearsed intellectual adventure," and education introduces persons to the skill and practice of this conversation.[59] "And it is this conversation which, in the end, gives place and character to every human activity and utterance."[60] Oakeshott clearly equates humanness with the intellectual endeavours and successes that ought to pervade every aspect of life. The benchmarks of humanness according to both Oakeshott and Hirst are intellect and reason, with all other attributes and abilities emanating from these distinctive, essential characteristics. Thus, the central purpose of education, to be a humanizing agent, is to subject all manifestations of human existence to intellectual and rational scrutiny.

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[58] R. M. Hutchins, Some Questions About Education in North America, as cited at length in Neatby, So Little for the Mind, pp. 256-7.

[59] Michael Oakeshott, Rationalism and Other Essays, as cited at length in Hirst, "Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge," p. 414.

[60] Ibid.

In overview, traditional education has been permeated by a type of philosophical idealism evident by its reliance on a concept of being that transcends the temporal contingencies of human experiences and which gives to those experiences, through intellectual understanding, a governing order and intelligibility. It is this permanent, unchanging world of being which should, through rationally established ideas, exert control over the character of human events both on the personal level and on the broad plane of social life. On the basis of this view, education is a matter of commmitting all aspects of human life to an understanding based on the rational arrangements of ideas that have come to be expressive of the highly desired norms of society and culture, which, in turn, is reflective of the rational harmonization of the "objective" cosmos itself.

This discussion of the primary philosophical tenets of traditional education provides one set of elements in the existing conflict. The basic philosophical tenets of progressive education, as the other set, will now be discussed to fully comprehend the context of a Whiteheadian approach to conflicting educational philosophies.

B. Progressive Education

There exists in my estimation no one school of thinking regarded as quintessentially "progressive." Strain's collection of writings on progressive education shows a diverse array of views ranging from that of Colonel Francis W.

Parker (purportedly the father of this movement),[61] to those of the genetic psychologist, G. Stanley Hall, Maria Montessori, pragmatist Percy W. Bridgman, B. F. Skinner, and John Dewey.[62] As with traditional education, a variety of terms have been used to describe this type of education. Strain calls it "progressivism."[63] Israel Scheffler describes it as the "insight model of teaching."[64] Dewey simply terms this brand of educational thinking with its pedagogical innovations, "new education," and further differentiates the extreme from moderate forms.[65] Although progressive education spans a great breadth of educational thinking, there are certain philosophical tenets which can be commonly considered progressive. They are the particular focus here.

Of the various theorists associated with progressive education, none can approach the influence and importance of Dewey. Although other champions of the progressivist cause will be considered throughout, the educational philosophy of Dewey will here (and I believe properly) dominate the discussion of basic progressivist assertions.

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[61] Strain, P. 63.

[62] Ibid., p. ix.

[63] Ibid., p.17.

[64] Israel Scheffler, "Philosophical Models of Teaching," The Concept of Education, edited by R. S. Peters (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), p. 124.

[65] Dewey, Experience and Education, p. 17.

1. Philosophical roots

a. "Becoming"

Brauner and Burns suggest that progressive education relies on a philosophical tradition radically different from that of traditional education. As noted earlier, "becoming" rather than "being" is seen as the fundamental description of reality.[66] Under the influence of Darwinian biological theory, development and adaptation rather than permanence and maintenance, came to be viewed as the proper description of the way things exist at their most basic level. Thus, this philosophy of becoming at the heart of progressive education intends to avoid a systematic structuring of metaphysical pronouncements which are deemed unchangeable and universally applicable; any philosophy of being which makes such pronouncements is thought to be, at best, misleading. In its place, a new metaphysical structure provides an explanatory system from which to reinterpret certain classical philosophical questions. Some philosophers, such as Charles Hartshorne, whose work centers on process philosophy and its particular applications expressed in process theology, find in this turn in philosophy a "neo-classical metaphysics."[67] This type of metaphysics regards change rather than permanence as the fundamental feature of reality, and so the evidence for change, development and the contingencies of existence become the focus. Change is not a superficial, temporary facade of the permanent and absolute core of existent things; change characterizes the way things actually exist,[68] and all aspects of life, including education, must come to terms with reality untethered from a classical philosophy of being; reality opens up upon a universe in flux.

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[66] Brauner and Burns, p. 69.

[67] Hartshorne, pp. 47-8.

b. Pragmatism

Progressive education finds inspiration in one of the great schools associated with this new metaphysics, pragmatism.[69] The impulses and ideas of pragmatists such as Charles Peirce and Williams James, clearly the seminal thinkers, have had notable force in this type of philosophy. Although they held widely differing views on the questions of, for example, morality and truth, they together exerted considerable influence on the philosophy of Dewey, who then developed his own style of thinking with its special applications to education.[70] Dewey attempted to synthesize the "logical" pragmatism of Peirce with James' humanist focus, to create a new philosophy of "instrumentalism." Dewey's vision involved the coherent and cogent unification of questions related to science and knowledge with questions concerning morals and values. A unification of these "truths" was to be achieved not by investigating the subject matter of experience alone, but by elucidating and implementing method.[71] Dewey found that in the investigation of problems of science, moral behaviour, and social interaction, a common pattern of thought unfolds which can result in solutions to problems and lead to various "warranted assertions." Truth, for Dewey, is warranted assertion which removes doubt by satisfying the questions originally giving rise to doubt. Inquiry in the areas of moral, scientific, practical or theoretical concern strives for such truth which, when found, serves "to create goods, satisfaction, solutions and integration in what was initially a wanting, discordant, troubled and problematic situation."[72] Such is the basic thrust of Dewey's instrumentalism, in which the objective is to delineate the "conditions under which reasoning occurs," and to explain the operations of thought that anticipate future consequences.[73] Dewey's pragmatic philosophy found the experience of knowledge and life to be key to an exposition of problem solving and an understanding of the manner in which life unfolds in terms of commonly accepted rules of logic and thought. Although Western thinking has traditionally devised such rules as corollaries of that which is thought to be permanent, immutable and absolute, Dewey's pragmatism sees such rules as derived from an analysis of the way particular activities in daily life are carried out.[74]

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[68] Brauner and Burns, p. 69.

[69] A concise account of pragmatic philosophy may be found in H.S. Thayer, "Pragmatism," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol.6, edited by Paul Edwards, (New York: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 430-6.

[70] *Ibid*., p. 431

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[71] Ibid., p. 434.

[72] Ibid., p. 435.

[73] Ibid., p. 434.

This sort of pragmatic philosophy deals with the relationship between ideas and the method for applying those ideas in practical ways. Its attention centers on the way ideas and patterns of thinking have a bearing on the world of experience. That world of experience is ostensibly the testing ground for ideas and hypotheses, to determine which work and are therefore, by Dewey's pragmatism, considered true, and those which do not work and are so considered false. The clearest connection between this type of pragmatism and progressive education appears at least in one obvious and significant way in its practice of relating ideas to a student's personal experience.

c. Naturalism

Another source of influence in progressive education is "naturalism."[75] Early manifestations of naturalist philosophy addressed the problem of individuality and personhood in relation to society, and hence probed the large philosophical question of the meaning of humanness. The work of Jean-

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[74] David G. Wangler, "Science, John Dewey and Liberal Democracy," Proceedings of the Alberta Universities Educational Foundations Conference, University of Alberta, April 26-28, 1984: Progressive Education - Past, Present and Future, edited by John R. Minnis (Athabasca, Alta.: Athabasca University, 1984), p. 217.

[75] Strain, p. 19.

Jacques Rousseau brought expression to this vein of questioning by wrestling with his own estrangement from contemporary European society. He came to see society as oppressing natural human inclinations; society has confined, controlled and suppressed them, and thus has reduced civilized man to a state of self-alienation and misery. To reverse this, he thought, education of the child ought to be attuned to the inborn curiosities, tendencies and resources of the individual. Although this type of education promotes freedom of expression and inquiry, he believed learning must not occur simply in wild abandon to the person's natural passions and feelings. Only when the capacities and natural inclinations of the child are brought to fulfilment in an orderly and harmonious manner does a genuine educational experience occur.[76]

The themes of Rousseau's writings are readdressed in the philosophy of nineteenth century American transcendentalism, particularly in the works of Ralf Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau and Bronson Alcott. They believed the perception of things in their natural state leads to an awareness of their "religious" value and ultimately to a sense of the meaningfulness of life. Three principles characteristic of this religious perspective can be identified. First, nature, tapped by the human senses, is thought to be the source of man's wisdom and morality.

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[76] Ronald Grimsley, "Rousseau, Jean-Jacques," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol. 7, edited by Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillan, 1967), p. 221.

Consequently, nature should be revered as the generative ground, the wellspring of that which is posited as true knowledge and authentic behaviour. Second, personal freedom is one of man's ultimate goals. This freedom exists only where there is faith in human nature, and where that faith unlocks human potential and promotes genuine human fulfilment. And third, "intuition and example are the primary modes of knowing truth." Truth is not contained in the works and sayings of past sages, but solely in the experience of personal awareness and affirmation.[77] Certain educational implications of naturalism appear as some basic maxims generally adopted by progressivists: "Education never ends;" "Growth is continuous;" "One learns by doing;" and "Education should aim to educate the whole person."[78] These naturalists provide an inspiration to Dewey who most fully shows how these questions can affect education.

The impact of naturalism on Dewey appears, as one example, in his discussion of education as growth. For Dewey and the naturalists, the immaturity of the child is a desirable quality, since a child has not been tainted or yet molded by social norms and conventions. Development and growth can simply follow from an unlocking of the potentialities of the immature child, a process that begins with respect for the child in his natural, "pure" state. In this state, all the conditions necessary for growth are present, conditions thought to be suppresssed when the child is regarded as but a void into which information is poured, or as an animal ready to be programmed with good habits.[79] Dewey explains further,

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[77] Strain, pp. 19-20.

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

> The true principle of respect for immaturity cannot be better put than in the words of Emerson: "Respect the child, be not too much his parent, trespass not on his solitude. But I hear the outcry which replies to this suggestion: Would you verily throw up the reins of public and private discipline; would you leave the young child to the mad career of his own passions and whimsies, and call this anarchy a respect for the child and nature? Respect the child, respect him to the end, but also respect yourself...The two points in a boy's training are, to keep his natural and train off all but that; to keep his natural, but stop off his uproar, fooling and horseplay; keep his nature and arm it with knowledge in the very direction in which it points."[80]

However strongly Dewey holds that the natural inclinations of the child should be respected, he also maintains that this respect must involve the business of creating habits which enhance the ability to learn from experience, and strengthen the capacity to "readjust activity to meet new conditions."[81]

2. Notion of experience

Respect for the child in his natural, undeveloped state is, by progressivists, paralleled by a concern for the child's type and quality of experience. Although the details of how experience is viewed by proponents of progressive education varies greatly, the importance of personal, immediate experience remains crucial to their overall educational philosophy. Maria Montessori, for example, would have the teacher control and intervene in a child's learning experience only in a very limited measure, for fear her intervention would quench the "sacred fire" of concentration and interest. She believes stimuli must be presented to the child according to his age and maturity, with the learning experience gently nurtured and balanced only by carefully chosen didactic material and exercises.[82] Maintaining a child's experiences in an unencumbered state of immediacy in a learning environment is key to Montessori's education theory.

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[79] Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 41.

[80] Ibid., p. 52.

[81] Ibid., pp. 46-9, 52.

In general terms, immediate experience is seen as the means and goal of progressive education, but where Montessori guards against most limitations being placed upon a student's experience, Dewey more extensively places delimiters upon those which can be considered truly educational.[83] Experiences which have marked educational value must exemplify certain principles, the most important of which, for Dewey, is the "principle of continuity." Continuity involves the selection of "those things within range of existing experiences that have the promise and potentiality of presenting new problems which, by stimulating new ways of observation and judgment, will expand the area of further experience."[84] This principle mitigates a child's tendency to self-indulgence by opposing any impulse for experience to cater merely to one's capricious desires,[85] and by promoting those experiences which allow one to develop the capacity to deal with a wide scope of life's problems and opportunities.[86]

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[82] Maria Montessori, "The Child," Modern Philosophies of Education, edited by John Paul Strain (New York: Random House, 1971), pp. 62-3.

[83] Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 89-90.

The value of those experiences which lead to an expanding scope of life experiences depends on what results those experiences might have in a person's life. Consequently, for Dewey, the "principle of regard for individual freedom and for decency and kindliness of human relations" also comes into play.[87] Dewey believes that the ideals of freedom and kindness are at the heart of American democratic society, and those experiences deemed educationally valuable must support them. The educator, being more mature, should help facilitate the occurrence of the conditions necessary for experiences to arise so that these ideals can be appreciated and personally apprehended.[88] Thus, it is toward a certain type of democratic social arrangements that truly educationally valuable experiences are headed, since those arrangements uphold the value of mutual consultation and persuasion, while deploring repression, coercion and force.[89] It is when consultation and persuasion become the established societal norm that a quality of human experience results that is open to growth and development, and is centered upon individual freedom. The overall objective is the production of a high quality of experience enjoyed by a greater number of persons than is possible within an anti-democratic form of social life.[90]

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[84] Experience and Education, p. 75.

[85] Ibid., p. 37.

[86] Ibid., p.38.

[87] Ibid., p. 34.

[88] Ibid., p. 38.

To be of educational value, experiences should not only expand the horizons of subsequent experiences, and not only promote individual freedom and humanitarian sentiments, Dewey believes they must also demonstrate some connection with past experiences, and have a positive effect on attitudes and emotions of future experiences. This he calls the principle of habit, a principle opposed to experiences occurring in isolation.[91] The principle of habit underscores the need for cohesion and a sense of wholeness in human experiences in order that all occasions of one's life have an interrelation and unity.

Dewey's fourth principle, the "principle of universal application,"[92] further distinguishes educative experiences

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[89] Ibid., p. 34.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid., p. 35.

[92] Ibid.

from the "mis-educative." Growth and development in one area of life should not impede or truncate growth and development in other areas of life; the "universe" of one's existence, including the physical, intellectual and moral dimensions, must benefit from any particular experience involving genuine growth. To illustrate, Dewey discusses the problem of those subjects taught in isolation, segmented by discrete and tidy units of chapters and courses. He suggests that when particular lessons or even courses are taught with an exclusive focus on the subject matter at hand, these courses can become isolated from the larger and more important context concerning the development of one's attitudes and responses. "Perhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies is a notion that a person learns only the particular thing he is studying at the time."[93] To be educationally valuable, Dewey believed that experiences must be exploited in all their opportunities for growth, not only with respect to intellect, but in all aspects of human existence.

In short, whether a student's experiences are valued as innately educational, being subjected to very little of a teacher's influence, as is the case with Montessori, or as in Dewey's view, experience must be fashioned in line with a number of principles defining their educational value, the immediate, personal experience of the student is of central importance to a philosophy of progressive education.

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[93] Ibid., p. 48.

3. Autonomy

As mentioned earlier, the notion of democracy figures prominently in the thought and practice of proponents of progressive education, and the various ideas connected with democracy, such as liberalism, tolerance and autonomy, have figured prominently in the shaping of a philosophy of progressive education.[94] Of these related notions, autonomy may be regarded as a centrally important issue related to a democratic situation, since a democratic society or institution, to be democratic, at its heart concerns the distribution and management of authority in order to ensure that all participants have an equitable voice in the decision making process.[95] It follows that societal authority must allow those voices to be expressed autonomously, free from threat or coercion. For Dewey, autonomy has its limitations, being restricted to the "participation of every mature human being in the formation of the values that regulate the living of men together."[96] As this relates to educational administration, then, such opportunity for involvement must be extended to parents only; children should not enjoy any such participation in Dewey's scheme because of their immaturity and inability in self-regulation.

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[94] Wangler, pp. 216-35.

[95] Eamonn Callan, "Authority, Democracy and Progressive Education," Proceedings of the Alberta Universities Educational Foundations Conference, University of Alberta, April 26-28, 1984 "Progressive Education - Past, Present and Future, edited by John R. Minnis (Athabasca, Alta.: Athabasca University, 1984), p. 67.

[96] John Dewey, "Democracy and Educational Administration," Modern Philosophies of Education, edited by John Paul Strain (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 108. Emphasis mine.

Other advocates of progressive education have taken a more radical position, suggesting that children should, to varying degrees, participate in the governance of their own educational institutions. Eamonn Callan, for example, has argued that if education is to uphold democratic ideals, and eventually see students as fully autonomous participants in a democratic society, then the educational system ought to afford students, as they become increasingly educated, certain measures of autonomy in the running of the school.[97] Besides this type of defense based on the democratic ideal, Gesell and Igl argue for autonomy on the basis of physiological and psychological need. They suggest that every child is born with unique characteristics and must be allowed to develop and mature according to his own natural pattern of growth. Throughout this development, the child is in tension, physiologically and psychologically, between stability and variability, and learns to regulate bodily and emotional needs in terms of these tensions in order to achieve an individual flowering of his own personality. Although parents should help the child manage such tensions on the path to maturity, "in the final analysis, all individual development depends upon intrinsic self-regulation."[98] They believe that parenting and formal education ought to respect and encourage the ability of individuals to exercise their autonomy on this basic level of physical, intellectual and emotional growth. Thus, autonomy and democracy ought to be practiced to varying degrees at home and school so that the child's individuality has the best possible chance to grow and find itself.[99] So whether democracy is an ideal grasped intellectually until it can be practiced in adult life, as with Dewey, or whether it is included as part of a child's educational experience, as with Callan, Gesell and Igl, autonomy, as most fundamental to democratic aspirations, is solidly established as a progressive ideal, and to greater or lesser degrees integrated into its type of schooling.

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[97] Callan, pp. 66-74

4. Notion of values

Particular tenets of progressive educational philosophy discussed so far showing its pragmatic roots, its tendency toward naturalism, the centrality of immediate personal experience, and its emphasis to varying degrees on a student's autonomy, are evidence of a broad set of axiological beliefs and assertions. But rather than delineate an array of particular values held by progressivists, what I believe better shows the important distinctives of a progressivist approach is a discussion of the source of values. As Brauner and Burns suggest in their anthology of educational philosophies, the question of the source and status of values is crucial to education,[100] since the entire orientation of the main educational objective, that being personal development, depends upon that which is valued as ultimately important -- and why. For progressivists, values are purely a human creation in response to particular environments and situations. Dewey, it is suggested, closely correlates experience and value. This interconnection opposes a traditionalist axiology that sees values as imposed from outside personal experience. "The [metaphysical] idea of the work of philosophy rests upon distrust of the capacity of experience to generate fundamental values and to direct deliberate effort in behalf of their realization."[101] Dewey, rather, finds the source of values precisely in experience. "Since values are not to be found ready-made in the order of things, man must create his own values out of the ingredients of human experience."[102] And since experiences stem from unique individual and social situations, values, then, are contingent upon those experiences. More directly, Dewey finds the wellspring of values located in the special human activity of finding meaning in one's experiences.[103] It is when particular experiences acquire meaning by relating them to other experiences that their importance and usefulness are grasped by the individual, and a sense of value is so generated. While this unfolding of meaningful experiences and the apprehension of values, according to Dewey, can occur both on a personal level or as a social process,[104] the source of values in either instance is found in individual activities rather than within some divine or transcendent realm of existence.

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[98] Arnold Gesell and Frances L. Igl, "Infant and Child in the Culture of Today," Modern Philosophies of Education, edited by John Paul Strain (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 46.

[99] *Ibid*., p. 44.

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[100] Brauner and Burns, p. 72.

[101] Dewey, "The Determination of Ultimate Values or Aims Through Antecedent or a Priori Speculation or Through Pragmatic or Empirical Inquiry," as cited extensively in Brauner and Burns, p. 75.

[102] Ibid.

5. Notion of progress

All of the philosophical issues discussed so far as contributing to that general sense of progressive education have a bearing on its special notion of progress, particularly the issues related to value, since that which can be viewed as progressive entails a movement toward the realization of values, and regressive, a movement away. The most basic stock of values, for progressivists, clearly follow from the practical and philosophical appropriations of becoming. The cosmos is thought to be in a fluctuating state where no fixed or final end is envisaged. Change is open-ended, and it is up to man to make what he can of the situations in which he finds himself. Since he is master of his own fate, the goals he chooses to pursue are of his own design, to meet concrete and temporal exigencies; there is no eschatological plan or divine will in operation.[105] Progress, then, becomes a matter of achieving specific goals to meet various needs at particular times. As conditions change, as new exigencies emerge, purposes and goals and values must change to accommodate those new situations and circumstances.

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[103] Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 76.

[104] Ibid., p. 79.

> According to the pragmatic viewpoint progress is represented by the increasing ability of individuals and societies to establish their own human and humanitarian goals (ends) by relying upon their past experiences and critical intelligence (means) to improve present and future experiences.[106]

With no gradual movement in play toward an eternally fixed and final utopia from which the temporal world is judged and evaluated, progress cannot be seen as the inexorable march toward some timeless reality, but only the result of the successful struggle with the daily problems of life, where solutions to those problems are discovered in situations where human ingenuity is allowed free rein. Progressive education aims to be a practical introduction to such a struggle, and be a tutor in a student's quest for success in life.

In overview, the philosophical orientation of progressive education is moored in a naturalism and pragmatism that finds expression most notably in Dewey's philosophy. Individual experiences are seen as the central focus to education since they create the opportunity for growth and development, and that opportunity is given greatest scope when students are afforded a significant measure of autonomy in decision-making processes concerning matters that affect their lives. Values are generated and molded within the learning environment, and are expected to be relevant to particular situations by being open to adjustments as situations and needs change. And although both traditional education and progressive education aspired to promote and ensure progress, progressive education sees progress in terms of its own philosophical agenda centered on concrete, practical successes in the individual's life.

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[105] Brauner and Burns, p. 71.

[106] *Ibid*., p. 78.

Having discussed the basic philosophical tenets of traditional and progressive education, they can now be restated in summary form in order to stress the uniqueness of their respective positions, and better define the conflict that later will be discussed in terms of a dialectic.

C. Elements of the Dialectic of Traditional and Progressive Education

In the first place, then, each type of education is aligned with a different general philosophical orientation. Broadly stated, traditional education regards being as the fundamental category of reality. The unchanging, permanent and universal aspects of existence are thought to promote a stable social order and generate gnoseological certitude despite the contingencies and variableness of daily life.

Progressive education abandons any quest for certitude in the ultimate, absolute sense, emphasizing, rather, in its educational programs the changing situations that constitute the commonly experienced world that wholly constitutes the horizon of human existence. Within each type of education, the student's experiences and goals are ordered and understood with respect to being, or to becoming, thus orienting education to radically different dispositions. Following from this, each reflects a distinctive philosophical lineage, traditional education drawing on the heritage of a philosophical idealism that centers on an account of a permanent and absolute realm of Being, expressed by systems of ideas governing the cosmos, and progressive education finding inspiration in a naturalist philosophy that sees nature, and man as a part of nature, of its own accord developing and changing to meet the various exigencies of life. Among traditionalists, the child must be molded and fashioned through disciplined learning to become the good citizen that measures up to the prized ideals of society, while progressivists regard the child as innately good and, being so, must be allowed to grow and develop in pursuit of his instinctive inclinations that naturally, eventually lead to full maturity. The influences of pragmatism, in addition to those of naturalism, are evident in progressive education, especially where the important matters of life have come to be seen not as permanent truths posited in doctrines or propositions which tend to produce conformity and uniformity, but as individual, creative responses to needs and problems that arise in daily life. While a traditionalist education concentrates on acquiring a body of knowledge, a progressive education focusses on problem-solving that, it is thought, allows students the opportunity to develop the ability and confidence to make their own way in the world.

These broad philosophical categories are the bases for views of a more specific nature. Both emphasize the need to control human experience in order to achieve a desired educational result. But on the one hand, traditionalists place the reins of control initially in the clasp of the treacher who is to orchestrate educational experiences, and in doing so, to produce in the student habits and patterns of thought. These habits of thought serve ultimately to regulate the adult experiences of life, and perpetuate in thought and deed the highest ideals and enduring traditions of society. On the other hand, the progressivists expect the control of experiences to stem from the natural ability of the student to choose and evaluate experiences according to his needs, desires and anticipations of the consequences of his choices. Habits of thought and deed, it is believed, tend to stifle this natural ability, and thus, they are considered anti-educational.

These questions about control of experiences readily lead to a consideration of the relationship between experience and knowledge, where again we see evidence of distinctive philosophical orientations. For the traditionalist, knowledge is posited as a vast body of truths and information concerning transcendent being as it relates to personal and collective experiences and traditions. The significant purposes of education is to ensure the intellectual grasp of segments of this body of knowledge by individuals, and the transmission and maintenance of the intellectual and cultural traditions from one generation to the next. Knowledge, according to progressivists, is a matter of a student, under the guidance of a teacher, interrelating and understanding experiences, and establishing for himself a body of knowledge related to his experiences of the world.

Traditionalist theory tends to associate knowledge with the meaning of humanness; it is only as persons acquire the type of knowledge that appreciates the traditions of society, and as they meet a standard of intellectual capacity, that individuals become fully human. The distinctly human quality of the species is its capacity for the kind of knowledge that relies strongly on the ability to reason. Thus, education should be designed specifically to develop such intellectual characteristics. By comparison, humanness for progressivists is associated, not merely with intellectual achievements, but with all the dimensions of human life, including the vast array of human proclivities, choices and potentialities. Humanness touches upon all the experiences of life, for together they reveal that special human quality of physical, mental, affective or social vitality. And thus, a truly progressive education designs its plan for formal schooling to appreciate all aspects of a student's life, both in actuality and potentiality.

It follows that the function of experience has an important but distinctive focus in each philosophy of education. Traditionalists believe a student's experience to be proportioned to, and supportive of, the development of patterns and habits of thought that control all behaviour and subsequent experiences. Those experiences which detract from this type of mental development are, in effect, opposed to truly educational objectives. Progressivists, too, recognize the importance of experience, but see not only intellectual experiences, but experiences in the physical, affective and social dimensions of life to have a pronounced effect in the person's education. Thus, certain restrictions involving externally imposed discipline, and even coersion, often regarded by traditionalists as needed and useful in a child's schooling experience, are seen by progressivists to threaten the sensitivities of the child and likely to impede educational progress. Based on these general philosophical postures and central themes, other philosophical assertions come to light. Traditionalists hold that values are determined and expressed in relation to transcendent and absolute knowledge, and it is only the educated person who can best order his life according to such values. In contrast to this noetic genesis of values, progressivists see values as a personal issue, determined by the individual and evidenced in the manner in which he integrates all of his experiences. Values are not permanent, unchanging ideas expressing the ideal order of things, but are the individual expression of a variety of opinion, preferences, tastes, and what seems to be workable. Values, for progressivists, are entirely contingent upon situations and circumstances, and therefore must be flexible to meet new challenges in daily life. For traditionalists, a successful education is one which ensures the grasp of universally valid, permanent values, while with progressivists, education serves to promote the ability to create and engage one's own values.

A similar disjuncture exists between traditional and progressive education concerning the notion of truth. For traditionalists, one's perception of reality, to be sure, is expressed by propositions, the core meaning of which does not change over time and according to particular circumstances; what does change is merely the application of truth to new situations. An intellectual affirmation of these truths constitutes a correct understanding of the way things really are. This, in its most basic rendering, is the supreme goal of education. Opposite this, progressivists view truth as that which can be affirmed as "workable" in a particular situation under certain conditions. The expression of truth, then, is found not so much in propositions as in the way a person lives in the world, in allowing one's potential to be best realized, and in successfully negotiating the problems of life. Progressive education is one which merely seeks to offer a measure of guidance to a student who must come to terms with the contingencies and variables of life.

Both traditional and progressive education aspire to some vision and realization of democracy, and in support of certain democratic ideals, uphold the autonomy of the individual, however that may be described. Among traditionalists, autonomy is believed to be properly exercised only in adult life, and children, through the educational process, are taught obedience and conformity in preparation for responsible adult life. Education of a traditional mode, tacitly if not intentionally, serves as an important socialization tool to this end, and when wielded effectively sees the child conform to the ideals, customs and mores of society. Some progressivists, on the other hand, maintain that autonomy must be offered to students in a measure corresponding to their educational development, since an education that is consistent with its objective to uphold democratic ideals must, in practice, demonstrate them. Consequently, "progress" envisaged by progressivists, at least in part, is marked off by an increasing exercise of autonomous thinking and behaviour among students. Progress, too, exists within a traditionalist mode of education, but is thought to occur when the highly valued traditions of society are perpetuated and the conventions, patterns of thought and behavioral norms are appreciated and exemplified by promising students.

These positions and counter-positions compose the major points of contention in the conflict of educational theory and philosophy, even if the two basic types of education cannot be discretely and rigidly represented in precise canons of belief. It must be stressed that not every traditionalist would whole-heartedly endorse every position here identified as belonging to traditional education; likewise, not all progressivists would uphold every assertion regarded as progressive. However, these distinctive viewpoints indicate the general philosophical orientation and thrust that constitute the two opposing modes of education. These are the elements which will be discussed later in hopes of integrating them within a perspective based on Whitehead's philosophy that recontextualizes conflictual components as a dialectical integration of ideas.

III. EXPLORING VARIOUS APPROACHES TO THE CONFLICT

These divergent and conflicting views in educational theory and philosophy have generated conflict in education for some decades. A number of attempts have been made to describe, and even possibly resolve, the conflict from psychological, sociological and even philosophical angles.[1] This chapter will, but briefly, discuss the general nature of some of these approaches in order to lead to and contextualize a discussion of the conflict handled from a Whiteheadian perspective as dialectic. Only a few key works have been selected, but I believe they adequately represent the deficiencies typical of past approaches to the existing problems of conflict in educational thought. Discussing these deficiencies, it is hoped, helps to demonstrate the sufficiencies and attractions of the basic Whiteheadian approach.

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[1] For example, this concern was expressed in the writings of Jean Piaget (Science of Education and the Psychology of the Child, translated by Derek Coltman [Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1969], especially Chapter 4, pp. 65-80), which describes a hope for reconciliation of all educational matters through international cooperation and collaboration, (pp.111-22). A sociological interpretation of progressive education's emergence in response to the social inequalities perpetuated in the past by traditional education appears in the work of Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, Schooling in Capitalist America. Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life, (New York: Basic Books, 1979). They believe social change, and a social revolution is needed to establish effective democracy and meaningful equality. The conflict is resolved, it is suggested, through a process of dialectical historicism and materialism. And a philosophical treatment, besides those mentioned explicitly in this chapter, is found in R. F. Dearden's Problems in Primary Education (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976).

As seen in the previous chapter, the distinctions between traditional and progressive education appear in sets of issues ranging from the practical to the theorectical and philosophical. Some educational theorists have attempted to show that a surperior education results from an amalgamation of both traditional and progressive modes of education. Where teachers might be seen as vendors of knowledge and as interpreters of knowledge,[2] where discipline within the school system might involve punitive measures and also some allowance for liberal-minded persuasion,[3] or when subjects could be taught as distinct units and then integrated with other subjects, a more effective education could result.[4] The "banking process" (to use Freire's term) should be combined, ideally, with a method centered on problem solving.[5] Actually, recent research has shown that where there have been some efforts at combining the two modes of education, these, in fact, have been attempts to follow (at least in the cases cited by Samuel Mitchell) a basically traditionalist agenda;[6]

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[2] Samuel Mitchell, "Is Progressive Education the Limit of Possible Reform in Education?" Proceedings of the Alberta Universities Educational Foundation Conference, University of Alberta, April 26-28, 1984, Progressive Education -- Past, Present and Future, edited by John R. Minnis (Athabasca, Alberta: Athabasca University, 1984), p. 153.

[3] Ibid., pp. 153-4.

[4] Ibid., p. 154.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., p. 157-9.

certain features of progressive education have been used to better implement the more strongly favored traditional education. Mitchell, who reports on this research, provides a further summary of recent investigations into the conflict of traditional and progressive education from a sociological perspective, but rather than finding some solution to the conflict, he suggests that the respective positions are hopelessly divided, unable to be reconciled according to a mandate based on social science.

Mitchell identifies some basic problems contributing to this irreconcilable condition. According to his analysis, since one approach cannot, from a sociological standpoint, be shown to be generally the superior in the overall schooling experience, a convincing argument for one as opposed to the other is not possible. It seems, according to some evidence, that certain subjects simply are more readily suited to one or the other approach. (For example, it is proposed that traditional modes of education are better suited to mathematics, while English to progressive modes.)[7] Therefore he concludes that the teaching of a variety of subjects within an overall curriculum, as is the wide-spread practice in schools, actually promotes a certain measure of opposition, and thus serves to sustain the conflict.

Another problem promoting this duality concerns the lack of evidence showing that one approach achieves the greater academic results.[8] If this is the case, then neither one of the two kinds of education can be repudiated, or championed, on scholastic grounds -- so the duality tends to persist. And thirdly, certain studies show teachers to use, unwittingly, progressive styles of teaching to preserve the class structures in society, which are thought to be supported by traditional education, thus exhibiting among other things no clear commitment to one type of education or the other.[9] The duality persists, he suggests, because of teachers' ambivalence on educational theory and their uncritical utilization of both types.[10] Mitchell's concluding remarks indicate, it seems to me, that these sociological and anthropological critiques of the polarity in educational thinking do not get to the heart of the matter. By skirting around the real source of the conflict, and by dealing with peripheral issues, the root problem remains largely obscured.[11] In light of Mitchell's assessment, then, it becomes clear that the problem should be investigated on a deeper, more fundamental level.

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[7] *Ibid*., p 157.

It is my contention that the conflict can be resolved by first invoking a philosophical discussion of the issues, that is, by attempting to clarify the basic questions involved in the analysis of education, and then following from this, providing an account and integration of the wide variety of the more educationally significant experiences. I suggest that the philosophy of Whitehead provides the effective tool to do this, and overall offers a compelling approach to the conflict because of its dialectical orientation. However, as a preliminary step to such a discusion, the works of other educational theorists should be considered where they attempt to come to terms with the philosophical conflict and thus show how to varying degrees a full integration of traditional and progressive educational philosophy has not yet been achieved. Three such philosophically-based approaches to unifying the conflicting theories will be discussed.

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[8] *Ibid.*, p 158.

[9] *Ibid.*, p 159.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *Ibid.*, p 163.

A. Dewey

An early attempt to deal with the conflict of traditional and progressive education appears in the works of Dewey. The editorial preface to Dewey's influential book, Experience and Education, indicates that he rejects major aspects of both types of education because "neither of them applies the principles of a carefully developed philosophy of experience".[12] His analysis, to be sure, may be accurate on this score, and his proposed philosophy of experience might seek to correct this deficiency. However, Dewey's solution to the controversy, exhibits certain problems itself. These become most clearly visible when the development of his work and the general nature of his approach to education is examined.

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[12] Dewey, Experience and Education, p. 10.

Dewey's most comprehensive statements on educational philosophy appeared in 1916. Democracy and Education encapsulated his social and philosophical thought of the previous twenty years which, up to that time, consisted primarily of educational matters. This publication seemed also to mark a transition in his thought from concerns with educational issues to the wider preview that included questions about human nature, civilization, logic and social theory. It was a work that strongly criticized conservative modes of education, and clearly served to establish his type of educational philosophy as "progressive."

As a progressivist, Dewey attacked traditional education, suggesting its failures, at least in part, were due to a reliance on the misguided notion of mental formation that some thought would result from memorization and repetitive exercises. Through these pedagogical activities, it was believed that the mind is formed in a manner and fashion so as to receive knowledge that is presented to it.[13] Dewey saw traditional education as also involving "psychological recapitulation," where the child, in the various stages of his development, reflects the historical stages of cultural development within society. As the child matures, his development was to gradually progress to the point where, as a mature adult, intellectual ability would correspond to and reflect the current level of cultural development.[14] Although this particular educational philosophy, Dewey noted, has had little influence beyond the German Herbartian school of thought, it demonstrates an otherwise typically conservative appreciation of traditional values and the educational assertion that the products of the mind should be in harmony with the "spiritual heritage of the past."[15]

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[13] Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 69-72.

Both education as recapitulation and education as retrospection are in contrast to Dewey's early formulation of a progressive approach, or as he defined it, education as "reconstruction." Essentially, for Dewey, education was a constant reorganizing and restructuring of experience to meet the immediate goal of improving the quality of experience.[16] That quality of experience depends upon how solidly connected are the interrelations of one's experiences, depends upon the depth of foresight in perceiving consequences to experiences, and upon the ability to identify and avoid significant undesirable experiences.[17] During this period in Dewey's thinking, the zenith of his educational philosophizing, a solidly progressivist posture was assumed, but which included some appreciation of certain insights from the traditionalist camp (that experiences of the infant, for example, are disorganized and unfocussed, and that the records of historic experiences can be utilized for educational purposes.)[18] However, at this stage of development in his thinking, Dewey did not attempt, or seem to envisage, an actual resolution to any conflict.

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[14] _Ibid_., p. 72.

[15] _Ibid_., p. 73.

[16] _Ibid_., p. 76.

[17] _Ibid_., p. 76-7.

The twenties and thirties saw progressivist schools of education emerge which apparently pushed to extremes some of its basic assertions.[19] By 1938 Dewey distanced himself, evident in his Kappa Delta Pi lectures published as Experience and Education, from the radical elements in progressive education, and attempted to reformulate his philosophy of education as neither progressive nor traditional, and indeed not as a reaction to any "isms" associated with education.[20] His "new education" was to stem from a thorough examination of certain principles of education related to experience, social control, freedom and meaning. It was to be a new education born of a desire to avoid the conflict between traditional and progressive education, believing that any response to the positions of either mode of education would result in new positions that are unprofitably constructed negatively rather than positively. In such instances, he thought, educational philosophy would take its clue in practice from that which is rejected instead of from the constructive, creative aspects of its own philosophy.[21] Consequently, Dewey sought to deal with the conflict by isolating his approach from both camps, and by constructing a philosophy grounded on the principles governing the quality of experience apart from any conversation whatsoever, explicitly or implicitly, with the current conflicting views.

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[18] Ibid., p. 73.

[19] Experience and Education, pp. 6-7.

[20] Ibid., p. 20.

The question which concerns me at this point is this: Does, and indeed can, Dewey's avoidance of the conflict constitute, aside from the details of his proposal, a method for an acceptable and productive solution to the problem? In the first place, based on a criterion elucidated by Dewey himself, his approach displays some incongruency: his educational theory asseverates for its own formulation the importance of taking up something from those experiences which have gone before and modifying in some way the quality of those which come after, yet in dealing with the conflict he attempts to disregard a broad spectrum of educational experiences relevant to the question at hand, and which figures directly, I believe, in any comprehensive unification to educational philosophy. He hopes not to have the conflict with all its negativity affect his educational thinking, but it seems that a truly penetrating analysis intended to solve the problem would address it explicitly. Furthermore, responding to past conflicting positions does not _necessarily_ involve a negative, reactionary approach. It may be possible to construct a philosophy of education which _appreciates_ certain elements from either position, and to create a positive integration of them within a new philosophical horizon. (As will become clear in due course, dealing with conflicting elements as a dialectic allows for such appreciation and integration.) Dewey may have cautiously negotiated a middle ground between what he sees as extremes in educational theory, but does not, in his flight from the controversy perceive and harvest the possible potentials stemming from the conflict. And possibly because he has not confronted those issues in depth, he himself has failed, despite his intentions, to transcend the limited horizon of progressive educational philosophy.[22]

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[21] _Ibid_., p. 20.

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[22] Dewey's "middle ground" is still widely considered progressivist, and not ostensibly an alternative to traditional and progressive education. Philosophies of education normally link Dewey with progressive education. Cf. Brauner and Burns; T.W. Moore, _Philosophy of Education: an Introduction_ (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), especially p. 37; and the April, 1984 conference proceedings, _Progressive Education -- Past, Present and Future_.

B. Maritain

A discussion of education's philosophical conflict that more directly deals with a possible integration of some of the main issues appears in the work of Jacques Maritain. His Yale University lectures of 1943 argue for a resurgence of liberal education, but not in terms of a return to the past, but by way of a new humanism which seeks to "rediscover the integrity of man...."[23] Maritain argues against any entrenchment of liberal education in the philosophical positions which generally have been associated with traditional education, and hopes to transcend by way of a revitalized liberal education other cleavages and polarities that have tended to fracture modern civilization. To this end, Maritain proposes an "integral humanism" that aspires to interpersonal and social collaboration which, he hopes, will overcome the polarities of individualism and totalitarianism, of social aspirations and individual human rights, of freedom and responsibility, of religious devotion and secular commitments, and of work and leisure.[24] The context of global conflict in the forties provides Maritain with an example of the destructive powers of suspicion and division that is set against his proposed regenerative ecumenical humanism with its related agenda for a new orientation to education.

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[23] Jacques Maritain, Education at the Crossroads (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), p. 88.

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

The general intent of Maritain's new education is to "shape man" and to "guide the evolving dynamism through which man forms himself as a man."[25] These initial statements immediately envisage a unity of purpose to otherwise conflicting educational theories -- from a traditionalist perspective, to "mold" a person, and from a progressivist perspective, to promote one's self-development. Specific educational aims ensure this general purpose is achieved. The first is to have a child-centered education whose goal is the acquisition of practical wisdom. Maritain suggests that progressive education has well-conceived educational methods, but those methods have detracted from the attention that should be given the goals of education. In his view, contemporary education is not equipped to provided adequate guidance toward long term results and objectives, and consequently falls short in the realm of practical wisdom.[26]

His second aim for education, in addressing the question of humanness, deals with the nature of human beings as understood in terms of two broad categories -- one that appeals to a purely scientific idea of man which considers only data that are measurable and observable, and another, a philosophico-religious idea, that deals with the essential, intrinsic and "intelligible density of that being we call man."[27] Maritain acknowledges that the scientific view can supply educational theory with important information about the "means and tools of education," but a philosophy of education also must integrate the non-empirical, spiritual insights of a philosophico-religious perspective. To fully deal with the nature of man, a view and assessment of the complete scope of individual characteristics and potentials should be included with empirically-based analyses.[28]

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[25] Ibid., p. 1.

[26] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

His third aim of education seeks to balance the emphasis on action and problem-solving that is central to pragmatic philosophy, with "contemplation and self-perfection, in which human life aspires to flower forth...."[29] Besides the practical, day-to-day affairs of man, there are the spiritual and purely reflective pursuits leading to intellectual truth and wisdom. Consequently, both physical activity and thought should have a balanced emphasis in education. Education, in the fourth place, should avoid an exclusive concentration on one type of emphasis, such as education for the individual person, or on the other hand, education for the common good.[30] Specifically, what should be avoided, in his view, is a traditional education that emphasizes "bookish individualism," and an experientialism of progressive education which is almost entirely orientated toward an educational process emphasizing social results. Both emphases are needed to achieve the immediate and pressing objectives of intellectual astuteness, social cooperation and harmony, and to realize the ultimate educational goal of attaining a fulfilment of personal potentialities.[31]

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[27] _Ibid_., p. 5.

[28] _Ibid_.

[29] _Ibid_., p. 12.

[30] _Ibid_., p. 12.

A fifth aim endeavors to correct a narrow intellectualism of, first, traditional education in which is prized, above all else, reasoning and rhetoric, and secondly, the restrictive, if not harmful, intellectualism found in certain manifestations of progressive education, where personal experience is understood solely in terms of scientific categories. Each form of intellectualism must be broadened to adequately account for the pursuits of individual interests as well as the struggle for intellectual excellence.[32]

The sixth aim concerns the human will. Certain educational theories, Maritain points out, have long emphasized the importance of creating certain patterns of decision making, and thus have emphasized the importance of "forming" the will. One such example is the position of traditionalists who see education's primary objective as establishing those ideals which reflect "the good life," and having one's decisions and behaviour conform to these ideals. In their view, it is more important to have the will to do good than to be learned.[33] Maritain calls this emphasis on will "voluntarism," being essentially a rejection of a rigid intellectual ordering of life by "making intelligence subservient to the will and by appealing to the virtue of irrational forces," specifically, the forces of morality, virtue and generosity.[34] Maritain agrees that education has not dealt adequately with the formation of the will, but a correction of this deficiency, he explains, should not espouse an outright abandonment to natural instincts, but should somehow co-ordinate intellectual and volitional development. The final aim of education is to promote the growth of love, which in its spiritual rather than romantic form, Maritain considers the most important. Love, he believes, cannot be taught like some topic in a curriculum, but must be allowed to develop naturally in an environment of freedom and acceptance.[35] Education must create such an environment where love can germinate and grow, both for the individual and for social groups.

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[31] Ibid., p. 18.

[32] Ibid., pp. 18-20.

Maritain's overall educational philosophy critiques both traditional and progressive educational theories. The aims of education he elaborates involve the weighing of positive and negative features of both types of current educational philosophies, and actually incorporates many of those features he considers valuable in his elucidation and justification of a new humanist liberal education.

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[33] *Ibid*., p. 20.

[34] *Ibid*.

[35] *Ibid*., p. 23.

An integration of certain conflicting elements in educational theory and practice in Maritain reflects his neo-Thomistic philosophy,[36] and so covers a wide range of views envisaging comprehensive changes to education. However, Maritain seems to be distracted from addressing directly the essential philosophical questions at the heart of the conflict, a distraction likely due to the immediate, seemingly more pressing, practical issues of world crisis in the mid-forties. Consequently, his contribution to a comprehensive solution to the conflict in educational theory and philosophy is greatly curtailed. But regardless, Maritain does indirectly contribute, I believe, to a solution in this way: his work exemplifies the general direction in which a solution must be found, that being, toward conflict resolution not based upon disputation and repudiation, but based upon a higher, more comprehensive viewpoint that can integrate opposing positions.

C. Crowe and Lonergan

A more recent, more in-depth treatment of the conflict is found in a volume by Jesuit philosopher and theologian, Frederick E. Crowe, Old Things and New. A Strategy for Education. Despite his disclaimer that the book is written for one who is not a philosopher of education, it does offer many insights into educational philosophy which, for purposes here, provide a useful comparison to the Whiteheadian approach. Overall, Crowe sets forth the foundation for conjoining two distinct educational orientations. As he states, "The problem before us is to reconcile the age-old opposition in education between the way of progress and the way of tradition."[37]

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[36] Joseph Evans, "Maritain, Jacques," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol. 5, edited by Paul Edwards (New York: The Macmillan Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 160-164.

The basis for the reconciliation, this being his strategy, lies in an analysis of two complementary ways of human intellectual development. The way of progress (also called the way of achievement) originates in one's own experiences and moves through higher levels of insight and explanation to reach the existential crisis of decision and eventual affirmation and declaration of one's own values. The way of heritage begins with values that are generated within one's cultural and social matrix. These values are, in various ways, accepted by a person as part of his integral body of beliefs. As the learning process unfolds, the tradition becomes increasingly integrated within one's conscious awareness, beliefs are gradually understood, and they come to enrich personal and interpersonal experiences.[38] Crowe regards the way of achievement and the way of heritage as "two vector forces" in education, at times disparate, at times even in conflict, but which can, however, be in balance and harmony overall. Striving toward such a balance, the child moves into adult life to exhibit a personally satisfying equilibrium -- a balance between creative genius, and the values and achievements of the past which he has accepted as his heritage.[39]

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[37] Frederick E. Crowe, Old Things and New. A Strategy for Education (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1985), p. 1.

[38] *Ibid*., pp. 1-39.

The philosophical basis of Crowe's description and, he believes, the basis for the unification of traditional and progressive education, is found in the thought of Jesuit philosopher, Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan has elucidated a general pattern to the human knowing process that begins with the data of personal experience, moves to an understanding of these by discovering intelligible interconnections among them, and culminates in a judgment of fact or a judgment of value that answers the questions "Is it so?", "Is it good?", and "Is it worthwhile?" This development of human conscious awareness propels one to an existential crisis of deciding on a course of action that is based on experience, intelligence and perspicaciousness. Lonergan, at least tacitly, and Crowe, explicitly, have attempted to integrate the Platonic concern with the intelligible, the Thomistic analysis of the factual, and a Kierkegaardian interest in the existential within an all-encompassing epistemology and an over-arching metaphysics.[40]

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[39] Ibid., pp. 26-27.

By utilizing this epistemology, Crowe sees that both traditional and progressive views on education operate under imperatives universally applicable to all educational questions: be intelligent, be reasonable, and be loving towards others.[41] An integration of the two types of education is based on the realization that any creative personal achievement, and any achievement brought about through the way of heritage must satisfy these imperatives, and only then can a truly balanced and successful education be realized. A further basis for integration is attributed to what Crowe sees as subjective and objective poles in educational experiences. Inasmuch as one's experience, one's understanding or one's judging entails something that is experienced, understood or judged, there is demonstrated a subjective-objective isomorphism, the subjective dimension being the experiencing, understanding or judging, and the objective as that which is experienced, understood or judged. An education that purports to be comprehensive of human conscious awareness deals with both the subjective and objective poles. Crowe's proposed way of creative achievement involves the subjective development of personal capabilities for experience, understanding, judgment and decision, while the way of heritage attends to the objective questions concerning what is valued, believed, what is explained and understood.[42] An integrated education apportions equal weight to the development of creative personal achievement actualized in the student who is _himself_ and not a mirror of someone else, and to the development of a sense of one's particular historical and social context, and where one understands that milieu and feels at home in it.

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[40] _Ibid_., p. 31. Cf. Bernard Lonergan, _Insight. A Study of Human Understanding_ (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978); and his essays related to cognitional structure in _Collection. Papers by Bernard Lonergan_ edited by Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967); and _A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J._ edited by William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard Tyrrell, S.J. (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1974).

[41] Crowe, p. 44.

True to its title, Crowe's integration of traditional and progressive education is really a strategy, one that outlines the fundamental structure around which an account of an integrated educational philosophy might be detailed. Crowe does, I believe, recognize the proper locus of a possible genuine integration of traditional and progressive education, that being a philosophical reasoning that seeks to overcome otherwise intransigent and philosophically isolated positions by appealing to a higher viewpoint and a broader horizon of thinking. However, his position is largely limited to the intellectual dimensions of education -- for Crowe, knowing and knowledge, if not entirely what education should be about, is certainly paramount to education. I believe an even broader perspective is needed to deal in positive ways with the conflict, since it pertains not only to the intellectual questions of learning, but also the affective, social and other dimensions of human life that relate to educational processes.

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[42] _Ibid_., pp. 106 ff.

D. Summary

The approach stemming from social-scientific analyses of the disjuncture between traditional and progressive education shows the inadequacy of dealing merely with the practical consequences of theoretical positions. A more adequate approach would cut to the heart of the matter, namely, a philosophical analysis of the ideas and values that ground an educational theory and entire way of practical living. Dewey does address the problem of the friction between the types of education from a philosophical point of view, but fails to deal explicitly with the conflict, proposing instead a philosophy of experience that is neither to accept nor reject particular fundamental tenets of either perspective. And rather than develop a distinctly new approach to education, which is his intention, Dewey appears to reconstruct a basically progressivist theory. Maritain advances, I believe, an approach superior to Dewey's in that he intimates (but somewhat obliquely) the value and the pitfalls, from a philosophical standpoint, in both traditional and progressive education. But Maritain does not move significantly beyond his overriding concern with questions of pedagogy and theory oriented to practical issues. To be sure, he does accommodate a much wider scope of educational thinking than does Dewey, but the philosophical underpinnings of his viewpoint remain somewhat obscured by his interest in the justification and concrete implementation of a revised liberal education. A more comprehensive perspective is yet needed to genuinely overcome the conflict in educational philosophy.

Certain deficiencies in Dewey and Maritain have been overcome to some extent in the recent work of Crowe. First, Crowe seems to treat important philosophical aspects of both educational views without a bias for one over the other. And second, he handles the conflict not as elements competing for supremacy, but as elements of a dialectic, that is, as elements which can be viewed as complementary from a philosophical perspective that is broader than each school of thought, largely compatible with the views of both traditionalists and progressivists. As will become clear in due course, these features of Crowe's work will figure prominently in the Whiteheadian approach. But Crowe limits his treatment of the issues (possibly due to the almost exclusively intellectual concerns in Lonergan's philosophy) to matters primarily of the intellect. Both traditional and progressive education deal with philosophical questions beyond intellectual, rational concerns, and to fully overcome the conflict, these issues, too, must be dealt with. So where Crowe offers a broader philosophical treatment of the various elements at the heart of the conflict than does Dewey or

Maritain, Whitehead's work spans a philosophical horizon of still greater latitude than does Crowe's. Thus, I believe, Whitehead's approach best deals with this problem of educational conflict, and to an exposition of this Whiteheadian approach I now turn.

IV. THE WHITEHEADIAN APPROACH

Philosophical thought inspired by, and to a large extent directly involving Whitehead's metaphysics, as noted earlier, advances an understanding of the cosmos and human existence broad enough to encompass principal elements from both traditional and progressive educational theory. The general thrust the Whiteheadian approach to philosophy educes a plethora of new possibilities for understanding traditionally held notions and clarifying through systematic interrelationships the meaning of their expressions. It consists of questioning and enlarging the presuppositions underlying contemporary academic and common sense thought. At the very core of this way of thinking lies Whitehead's belief that philosophy ought to be an adventure in speculative thought stemming from and focussing on human experiences.[1] It is my contention that, because Whitehead's philosophy better accounts for the full spectrum of educational experiences than does any other philosophy that has been applied to educational questions and the problem of conflicting theories of education, an approach to this conflict in education utilizing his insights best resolves the dispute and relieves its destructive tensions.[2] In general terms, this is accomplished by appreciating and affirming educational experiences that within narrower systems of thought are otherwise overlooked, devalued or excluded. His approach to the conflict accounts for experiences valued by both traditionalists and progressivists since, to his way of thinking, they are not factions in a battle but elements of a dialectic.

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[1] Alfred North Whitehead, Modes of Thought (New York: The Free Press, 1968), pp. 172-173.

[2] A comprehensive study would be required to substantiate any claim that Whitehead's philosophy is the best, at least in its understanding of human experiences. The focus here is limited to the problem of conflict in educational theory

The approach of Whitehead and of those who make use of his philosophical insights genuinely bridge the gap between conflicting, entrenched positions by seeing polarity and differences as integral to a dialectic. As such, those poles do not promote alienation and rigid dogmatism, but actually allow for some resolution and creative use of tensions through an understanding of the interconnections among variant positions.[3] The conflict treated as dialectic from a Whiteheadian standpoint is not simply a syncretism, that is, a matter of noticing and extracting for one's own purposes certain attractive features of another viewpoint.[4] Rather, it is a matter of integrating and thus unifying the basic philosophical tenets underlying the theories of traditional and progressive education; it is a broadening of the

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where, I believe, that the comparison of Whitehead with others depicts a superiority in approach.

[3] Cf. Frank C. Wegener's description of bipolarity operative in the becoming of an organism. Of this, more will be said later. Wegener, The Organic Philosophy of Education (Dubuque, Iowa: Williams C. Brown and Company, 1957), p. 453.

[4] Wegener, "Alfred North Whitehead: An Implied Philosophy of School and Society," Educational Theory Vol. 11, No. 4 (October 1961), 208.

conception of reality to encompass both educational philosophies; and overall, it is an adventure into speculative thinking that seeks to understand the two positions as complementary aspects of a single, whole educational experience. This type of thinking, according to Whitehead, aims to understand coherently and logically every element of our experience.[5] My aim here is to elucidate this general framework for such an understanding of educational experiences affirmed by both traditional and progressive education.

Delimitations of the Whiteheadian Approach

a. Of focus

Whitehead did not write extensively on education,[6] and did not set forth a systematic philosophy of education.[7] But the relatively small corpus of assorted educational material attributed solely to Whitehead is enhanced by a larger body of secondary literature. (One of the great values of Whitehead's work, particularly the systematic presentation of his thought in Process and Reality, is its progenitiveness, due to its ready application to specific philosophical problems). The focus, then, of the present study is on both the work of Whitehead as it addresses directly, or as it can be applied to educational questions, and the work of those applying his thought to educational philosophy.[8] More specifically, the focus will be restricted to the fundamental philosophical tenets of traditional and progressive education which have been identified earlier.

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[5] Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality. An Essay in Cosmology (Corrected Edition), edited by D.R. Griffin and D.W. Sherburne (New York: The Free Press, 1978), p. 3.

[6] Joe R. Burnett, "Whitehead's Concept of Creativity and Some of Its Educational Implications," Harvard Educational Review Vol. 27, No. 3 (Summer 1957), p. 220.

[7] Wegener, "Alfred North Whitehead: An Implied Philosophy of School and Society." p. 194.

b. Of structure

The portrayal of the Whiteheadian approach will first treat those philosophical issues related to some of the practical affairs of education considered by Whitehead, then deal with elements of his implicit educational theory, and then, finally, propose how some of his key metaphysical notions can be used to resolve the conflict existing between the two dominant educational philosophies of our day. Thus, the discussion will move from the practical and concrete to the more theoretical and abstract issues.

An objection to this procedure might be raised by arguing that, since Whitehead did not develop a systematic philosophy of education, an effort to present his thought systematically is not faithful to his work or his intentions. However, in educational matters at least, Whitehead has given no indication of objecting to a systematic treatment or application of his writings. Further, his educational writings are not systematized, not because he objected to this type of approach, but because they are usually transcripts of isolated lectures of widely differing times and occasions, given to teachers, not philosophers. Elsewhere, Whitehead does present his work systematically, and argues for systematization.[9] Finally, as Joe Burnett suggests, "the 'romance' which his thought on education elicits does lure one toward an attempt at some precision in the details of his thought."[10]

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[8] Ibid., p. 208.

A. Educational Concerns of a Practical Nature

Whitehead's treatment of the conflict as a dialectic of traditional and progressive views becomes evident on the practical level of pedagogy and curriculum development and implementation. His incorporation of differing viewpoints can be seen, for example, in his general perception of the nature of curriculum, in his specific concerns with the classics in education, and with the interplay of freedom and discipline in schooling.

1. The general nature of curriculum

An early expression of Whitehead's educational views appears in the essay, "Science in General Education."[11] Although Whitehead's concern here is for a balanced scientific curriculum, he explicitly proposes, in general terms, what all curricula should address. Inasmuch as a scientific curriculum should allow for both the pursuit of personal interests and the study of factual knowledge, the content of any curriculum should contain a "soft element" and a "hard element."[12] The soft element encourages the type of study having little imposed direction, and allows students to choose topics and courses of study according to their own interests, what Whitehead calls "browsing." If lectures are to occur as part of the soft element of curriculum, he suggests they should supply the student with information that generates excitement in learning.[13] This soft element is balanced by a hard element which concentrates on the acquisition of exact knowledge based on first-hand experience. Here the emphasis is on the capacity of the mind to comprehend data and, through reasoning, to extrapolate from empirical observations.[14]

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[9] Cf. the opening sections of Process and Reality, especially pp. 7-9.

[10] Joe R. Burnett, "Whitehead on the Aims of Schooling," Educational Theory Vol. 11, No. 4 (October 1961), 278.

[11] Whitehead, Science and Philosophy (Patterson, N.J.: Littlefield, Adams and Company, 1965), pp. 199-200, first published in 1921.

These two elements have an obvious connection with the problem at hand. In practically applying his demand that both elements be present, Whitehead insists that reform in education, particularly progressive reform that advances the soft element, should not abolish, but be complemented by hard academic study and the acquisition of exact knowledge,[15] and he also suggests that formal teaching must avoid the dangerous tendencies of the hard element to accentuate both the mere aggregation of details and the proliferation of information often devoid of direct relevance to a student's life.[16] The personal sensitivities of the student nurtured by the soft element should be operative along with the development of a precise understanding of the facts and an accrual of practical knowledge. In a scientific curriculum, and generally in any type of curriculum, when the soft and hard elements are balanced and thoroughly integrated, students can begin to comprehend and acquire the "art of life." Whitehead calls the development of this art *the* business of education, and being so, developing the skills to achieve it should permeate the daily activities of classroom learning. It is an art which takes into account the unique potentialities of the individual, his tastes and his personality, and propels him toward the goal of blending knowledge, sensitivity and action as a way of life overall. Broadly stated, the soft element, with its emphases on student interests and on information that is relevant to one's life, upholds progressivist objectives, while the hard element, reflecting traditionalist interests, prizes intellectual training and precision along with a strong measure of student compliance to a prescribed plan of study and style of learning.[17]

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[12] Ibid., p. 205.

[13] Ibid., pp. 207-8.

[14] Ibid., pp. 205-6.

[15] Ibid., p. 203.

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[16] *Ibid*., p. 209.

Whitehead's design for a curriculum containing both hard and soft elements overcomes otherwise conflicting emphases by apportioning to each a suitable function and domain. His entire proposed national education program, including literary, scientific and technical curricula,[18] rests upon this complementarity and harmonization. In treating these starkly different approaches to education as a dialectical management and guidance of the practical matters of curriculum composition, with its hard and soft elements, we see the basic pattern operative in Whitehead's overall design for education, and an initial clue to his unique approach.

2. The classics in education

Like Whitehead's discussion of the general nature of curriculum, his remarks about the role of the classics in education address the problem of conflict between traditional and progressive education. His defence of a place for the classics in contemporary education shows how this conflict can be overcome, and again demonstrates that an understanding of differing elements under a dialectical rubric makes a unity of opposite ideas possible.

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[17] Whitehead, The Aims of Education and Other Essays (New York: The Free Press, 1967), pp. 38-9.

[18] *Ibid*., p. 49-50.

Modern Western civilization, Whitehead believes, is a paradigm of Roman culture and thought. Rome was able to bring together to varying degrees of proximity and cohesion Hebrew and Greek traditions concerning religion, science and art.[19] Informed by these traditions, Roman and medieval literatures gradually emerged, which do now offer those who study them certain benefits which, above all else, are realized in an exactness of thought and a definiteness and independent power of analysis, especially as students grapple with and achieve some ability to read and understand the original texts.[20] Study of these classical literatures, he suggests, are in danger of being lost to education, and so securing a place for the classics in the curriculum becomes critically important. This securement rests upon two factors: that the study of the classics be directly relevant to the personal experiences of the student, and that the flow of thought concerning the material studied moves from particular ideas to the more general.[21] These two factors, it seems to me, integrate certain progressivist tendencies in an overall traditionalist concentration on the classics.

In the first place, progressivists have often objected to the "bookishness" fostered by traditional education; information contained in textbooks, it was thought, emphasized purely intellectual understanding at the expense of the relevance such information might have for daily living. Whitehead supports a progressivist concern for relevance, but sees that those classical ancient texts, whose relevance has been, by some, called into question, are crucial to a full understanding of contemporary life with its traditions and complexities. For the classics to become relevant, he suggests the student should first engage in intensive study of the ideas expressed in the primary texts (with its secondary literature studied only later, should time and interest allow). Such ideas must then be transposed into "first-hand" knowledge by means of interconnecting classical ideas with a cultural milieu and one's personal life within that milieu. "When you come to think of it, the whole claim for the importance of the classics rests upon the belief that there is no substitute for first-hand knowledge."[22] First-hand knowledge of the ideas that have shaped Western civilization, _along with_ an understanding of one's own immediate history, establishes a relevancy to the classics, and, in Whitehead's opinon, only then is their study fully justified.

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[19] _Ibid_., p. 70.

[20] _Ibid_., p. 70.

[21] _Ibid_., pp. 64, 72.

Secondly, Whitehead suggests classical studies be introduced to students by showing them particular objects of sculpture, painting, or such artifacts that exemplify aspects of ancient domestic or religious life.[23] Comparisons of these items should follow, and then gradually it is expected, the general view of ancient civilizations will come into focus. Although this approach to teaching the classics does not reflect the extreme views of progressive education where the student alone chooses the subject of inquiry and decides for himself how he will carry out its study, Whitehead does uphold a general progressivist view that the child's learning stems from some encounter with particular concrete objects -- things which are used to direct or captivate his natural interest. Only after this can the larger scope of understanding be expected to come into view. Thus, classical studies, an enduring point of interest among traditionalists, should incorporate progressive pedagogical methods if their full educational value is to be realized.

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[22] _Ibid_., p. 74.

[23] _Ibid_., p. 72.

Adroitness in intellectual performance and a perspicaciousness emphasized especially among traditionalists as the prized outcomes of classical studies is thus maintained by the use of methods that relate subject matter to life experiences. We see that Whitehead's special interest in the character and purpose of classical studies again demonstrates in a practical way the unifying nature of his approach to education.

3. Freedom and discipline

The ever present practical side to his educational doctrine leads Whitehead to describe other possible instances where a balance in education ought to occur. Education has long wrestled with the issue of evoking either external pressures to elicit a certain desired academic result, or allowing the student to decide for himself an educational strategy. For Whitehead, this is a matter of balancing freedom and discipline within the learning process. Traditionalists have usually insisted on the need for imposed discipline, and even coercion, in achieving a desired level of academic performance among students, while progressivists tend to see imposed discipline, particularly when administered by some authority figure, as detrimental to personal growth and overall well-being. With Whitehead, both external discipline and personal freedom of choice are seen to have a legitimate function and useful integration within the educational process.

An investigation of this aspect of educational conflict from a Whiteheadian perspective first uncovers a particular view of human nature that recognizes a repeating rhythmic cycle to the development of the child.[24] Depending on the stage of this rhythmic development, in Whitehead's view, the child requires greater degrees of freedom or more stringent external discipline. In the overall formal educational process, and in every distinct unit of it, a student in the first stage of any such cycle requires some exercise of choice in selecting the way of learning which naturally interests him. In the subsequent stage, a self-motivated pursuit of knowledge should be subjected to the discipline necessary in acquiring a higher level of knowledge that is characterized by precise expression and a logical interrelation of ideas. Data must be assemble and understanding deepened, despite the waxing and waning of personal interest, in order that mastery over a subject area be finally achieved.[25] For Whitehead, the discipline required in attaining mastery, or even a minimum level of competence, comes about partly through discipline imposed from without, partly through a response to a personal inward drive to know and experience life, and partly from the intrinsic structure of ideas themselves.

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[24] A fuller account of this rhythm will be offered in another section of this chapter where its metaphysical aspects will be examined.

As disciplined learning produces some level of expertise in a subject area, the student should be encouraged, as the third stage, to creatively apply that knowledge.[26] Thus, the whole process of learning is a rhythm of fluctuating emphases, first on freedom to explore initial questions and problems, then on discipline which promotes exact knowledge and expression regarding these problems, then again on freedom that nurtures a wisdom in handling knowledge in an effective way in the illumination of a particular situation.[27] "The two principles, freedom and discipline, are not antagonistic, but should be so adjusted in the child's life that they correspond to a natural sway, to and fro, of the developing personality."[28]

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[25] Aims of Education, p. 32.

[26] Ibid., p. 37.

[27] Ibid., p. 30.

The view that a child, indeed any human being, is a complex organism composed of myriad elements, who has different needs at different moments of development, is essential to Whitehead's treatment of the problem of balancing freedom and discipline in the school setting. The variety of elements and distinguishable stages of development demand of both freedom and discipline an appropriate inclusion according to how those elements are relevant and those stages unfold. Both have their places and times in each period and in the whole span of a child's education.

Although other concerns of a practical nature raised by Whitehead address issues relevant to both traditional and progressive education, and could be used as examples of a unity that, to some extent, is achieved, those discussed here are suggestive enough of the nature of Whitehead's dialectical approach seen on the practical level. We shall now turn to a more penetrating examination of a Whiteheadian approach.

B. Educational Theory

The overarching theory guiding Whitehead's treatment of particular educational issues can be found in the common themes and interrelations among his essays on education, and by applying the notions advanced by his general philosophical system to the domain of education.[29] The central features of his educational theory seem to be encapsulated in his essay, "The Aims of Education," and from this essay four themes highly significant to the problem of the educational conflict emerge. They include the topics of educational rhythm, the religious quality of education, and the notions of inert ideas and soul murder, and compose the focus of this section. These topics, especially, provide important insights into his educational theory related to a dialectical treatment of the conflict.

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[28] Ibid., pp. 30-1.

1. The rhythm of education

The notion of educational rhythm is crucial to Whitehead's educational theory,[30] and, I believe, fundamental to an account of his dialectical approach. According to Whitehead, the process of human development unfolds in fits and starts, in an ebb and flow, through work and rest, as the elements constituting our existence find a proper locus and balance in a healthy life. This type of process, he suggests, should be recognized and explicitly involved in all matters related to schooling. The importance he places on rhythmic process can be seen especially by his recurrent treatment of this issue during his mid and later periods of teaching and writing,[31] and although this notion of rhythm permeates these many years of Whitehead's thinking, and a full accounting of rhythmic process must at some point come to terms with his broad spanse of philosophical reflection, the discussion here is limited to its application to education theory, and to the more obvious connections it has to some of the philosophical differences between traditional and progressive education.

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[29] Cf. Robert S. Brumbaugh, "Whitehead as a Philosopher of Education: Abstraction, Action, Satisfaction," Educational Theory Vol. 15, No. 4 (October 1965), 281; and Joe R. Burnett, "Alfred North Whitehead," Educational Theory Vol. 11, No. 4 (October 1961), p. 193.

[30] John R. Spraggins, "Whitehead's Educational Ontology," Educational Theory Vol. 34, No. 4 (October 1984), 373. A thorough account of the development of Whitehead's notion of rhythm can be also found in Nathaniel Lawrence, Whitehead's Philosophical Development (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California, 1956).

A preliminary clue to the meaning of Whitehead's notion of rhythm may be found in Hegel's view of development, said to proceed from thesis to antithesis, and then to synthesis.[32] These three phases of development are used by Whitehead as an initial backdrop for explaining the stages of rhythmic process as periods of "Romance", "Precision" and "Generalization". In the realm of education, intellectual development begins with

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[31] Victor Lowe, Understanding Whitehead (Baltimore, Md.: The John Hopkins University Press, 1966). Lowe's account of Whitehead's philosophical development is structured around what Lowe identifies as three periods of his work, that of mathematics, of natural science and of the philosophy of organism. It is the second and third periods that contain the fullest expression of the notion of rhythmic process.

[32] The Aims of Education, p. 17. In this essay Whitehead seems to limit his discussion of Romance, Precision and Generalization to the question of knowledge. Rhythm, although explicitly described in terms of Romance, Precision and Generalization, exists in the life of all organisms, and as this notion is applied to educational theory, more than just the epistemic questions must be addressed. This broader application of the notion of rhythm will be discussed when Whitehead's metaphysics and cosmology are treated.

Romance. At this stage some experience or idea ignites one's interest because it is novel and immediately relevant to some aspect of a person's experience. The person sees this intellectual encounter as an invitation to explore the myriad relationships between the new and the familiar. Romance for the individual is replete with emotion and excitement over that which is mysterious, unexplored and intriguing. This stage shows no concerted effort toward a systematic understanding of the topic of current interest, but rather involves a probe here, a dabble there, and in the process, questions stemming from one's natural curiosities arise to demand answers.[33]

In the pursuit of understanding, initial interest in a topic or idea gives way to Precision, a new mode of inquiry and a new stage of intellectual development. Now interest and inquiry begin to narrow in focus and deepen in concentration. At this stage, inquiry proceeds "by forcing on the students' acceptance a given way of analyzing the facts, bit by bit. New facts are added, but they are facts which fit into the analysis."[34] What was grasped only vaguely in Romance, now acquires a clarity properly suited to a systematic ordering and explanation of data. At the stage of Precision, the influence of Romance should not die, but continue to provide an underlying impetus for this ongoing inquiry when the hard work of intensive study has a tendency to diminish one's interest and, should that occur, possibly even to truncate the learning process.

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[33] Ibid., pp. 17-8.

[34] Ibid., p. 18.

The time of Precision fades as the "romantic" tendencies of the initial period are again enlivened, but now the original quest for understanding is enhanced both by a systematic ordering of ideas and through appropriate techniques in applying knowledge.[35] This stage of Generalization is characterized essentially by the creative application of the now heightened understanding of a topic or subject matter to new problems and situations of life. One cycle in the learning process is terminated with the stage of Generalization -- understanding has been achieved and its usefulness has been realized.

Whitehead shows the integration of Romance-Precision-Generalization to occur on different levels of learning called micro- and macro-cycles. On one level of learning where a particular lesson is the focus of attention, the cycle's phase (in this case, that of a micro-cycle) will show an emphasis initially on Romance, and when subsequent lessons are tackled, Precision and Generalization, respectively, will come to the fore. At the end of a set of lessons, the micro-cycle of "R-P-G" should have run its course, and the student should have attained a satisfactory understanding of a unit of study. Similarly, a collection of lessons, or a unit of study, should be designed to bring a student initially to a "romantic" understanding of a larger course of inquiry, and subsequent units in the course should promote understanding in the Precision and Generalization modes of the cycle. As these micro-cycles of learning are completed, they are thought to compose a phase of the macro-cycle of educational experience overall, first of Romance, then Precision, then Generalization. This macro-cycle of learning has been used to explain the development of successive stages in understanding, beginning with Romance in childhood,[36] moving to Precision in adolescence, followed in turn by the Generalization stage in early adulthood. The development of human life from infancy to adulthood is composed of learning cycles on both the micro- and macro-planes. It is a rhythmic development characterized by the respective tempos and intensities of the stages of R-P-G, and depicted by the interplay of the stages, through their emergence or subordination at various times in the learning process.

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[35] Ibid., p. 19.

Educational programs, in striving for success, should recognize, understand and accommodate the rhythmic nature of learning. The cyclical process of Romance, Precision and Generalization resonates as a rhythm where one stage of learning dominates one period of formal education, while the other stages are allowed active but subordinate roles. How these stages dominate will depend to a large extent on the type of subject matter being taught. A. H. Johnson, using Whitehead's categories and descriptions, suggests that during the period of secondary education, a student in his mid-teens will learn best if he is at the stage of Precision in language studies, but at the stage of Romance in the sciences.[37] At any one time the involvement of all the stages, to varying degrees, should be maintained in order that the student can enjoy variety and reach a high level of learning efficiency, and that "the rigors of routine and drill [Precision] are motivated by preliminary interest and enjoyment [Romance], and are seen to be steps toward greater values [Generalization]."[38] Education that follows this natural rhythm avoids the dull and stifling uniformity of learning which continually emphasizes the same stage of learning -- usually Precision in traditional modes of education, or unmitigated Romance in some types of progressive education.

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[36] Whitehead notes that the cycle involving adolescence is dominated by the stage of Romance. Johnson, on the other hand, suggest that adolescence is dominated by Precision. This discrepancy may be due to the definition of adolescence. Cf. Aims of Education, p. 21 and A. H. Johnson, Whitehead's Philosophy of Civilization (New York: Dover Publications, 1962), pp. 121-2.

How the two conflicting educational theories relate to the rhythmic process of learning through the balance and interplay of Romance and Precision, and harmonized in Generalization, is plain enough, but to understand the philosophical nature, and thus discover the more fundamental rationale for this dialectical treatment of the conflict, the basis for this rhythmic cycle in Whitehead's metaphysics should be explored.

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[37] Whitehead's Philosophy of Civilization, p. 123.

[38] Ibid.

This notion of educational rhythm is a corollary of Whitehead's general philosophical description and analysis of reality, in that educational rhythm reflects the ubiquitous rhythmic process of life _in toto_. Robert Brumbaugh, for example, describes this connection between rhythm and Whitehead's general metaphysics in his account of the stages, circularity and rhythm associated with life and learning.

> Whitehead's stages of learning are romance, precision, and generalization or satisfaction. A student ... is a complex entity which will continue to exist -- though less authentically or effectually -- even if he or she does not encounter proper learning patterns. But a pattern that fails to match the natural stages of process frustrates life and learning -- it is disregarded, accommodated to as an external accident, passed by with no important -- or even unimportant -- gain in insight or in depth.[39]

And further,

> ... [T]here is one most favorable pattern for learning which matches the phases of existence of very small entities and the careers of civilization alike. For the maximum effectiveness of circular design, we said, these basic phases of concrete development [being Romance, Precision and Satisfaction] must be acknowledged.[40]

The broad descriptive images of rhythmic process in human life and learning stem from Whitehead's analysis of the basic, irreducible manifestations of existence. Whitehead views reality as composed of "actual entities," also called "actual occasions," of which human beings are highly developed, intricate instances. These actual entities are "drops of experience, complex and interdependent."[41] The manner in which an actual occasion comes into existence, whether it be thoroughly complex or very simple, involves the process of development exhibiting the same three phases. The first phase is distinguished by its shades of encounter with the whole of reality identified as the actual universe. This universe consists of actual entities available to other actual entities through an accounting process that accepts or rejects them according to how relevant, how important or how forceful they might be in the immediate moment of experience. Such inclusion or exclusion is termed "prehension," positive prehension in the former case of accepting, and negative in the latter of rejecting. Once these entities, as data, are prehended, a phase (the second) of adjustment follows. Data are not merely absorbed by an actual entity, they are arranged and managed so as to best harmonize with all the other data positively prehended. The third phase, Satisfaction, completes the actual occasion. Now the relations among prehended data become established within the actual entity, and the entity, as a fixed fact, slips into the "past." The phasic cycle of prehension, adjustment and satisfaction constitutes an actual entity which, in the process of coming to be, results eventually in data that then enter into subsequent rhythmic patterns yielding other actual entities.[42] Such is the rhythmic, creative, cyclical process constituting all existent things.

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[39] Robert S. Brumbaugh, _Whitehead, Process Philosophy and Education_ (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1982), pp. 4-5.

[40] _Ibid_., p. 117.

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[41] Process and Reality, p. 18.

These three phases to an act of becoming have been correlated with the three stages in the learning process.[43] Although it is noted that Whitehead himself does not make this correlation, the application of his general metaphysical analyses to this educational issue is clear enough. The stage of Romance is analogous to the phase of prehension where concrete and abstract data are apprehended according to the interests and drives of the student. The stage of Precision corresponds with the phase of adjustment as those data which are apprehended acquire some systematic ordering, and particular relationships among those data are sorted out and tested. The stage of Generalization relates to the phase of satisfaction in that the actual entity as such becomes established as a fixed fact in time and available for subsequent integration in future entities.[44]

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[42] Nathaniel Lawrence, "Nature and the Educible Self in Whitehead," Educational Theory Vol. 15, No. 3 (July 1965), 214-6. See also Chapter 2 of Part I, and the early chapters of part II in Process and Reality.

[43] Lawrence, 215-6.

[44] Ibid.

Certain aspects of both traditional and progressive educational theory can be seen to complement the general contours of the rhythmic pattern of educational growth so described, and accentuate the larger perception of the development of natural life overall. In most general terms, progressive educational theory, in effect, concentrates on activities associated with the stages of Romance and Generalization where the student's creativity and freedom are paramount, while traditional modes of learning are especially suited to the stage of Precision with its emphasis on disciplined study and the acquisition of exact knowledge.

More directly to the issue at hand, the rhythmic development of actual entities is basic to envisaging certain possibilities for resolving the philosophical conflict between traditional and progressive education insofar as it can account for theoretical and philosophical differences that have been largely viewed as incompatible. For instance, with respect to the question of how a child achieves that which is good for itself, that is, from an educational point of view, how a child might attain the greatest potential for intellectual development, progressivists generally see the child as having a natural sense of what this should entail, and a natural ability to achieve its potentials. Traditionalists, on the other hand, see such sense and ability as resulting from sources external to a child's own perceptions and talents. An education adapted to the rhythmic process can accommodate the emphases of both traditionalists and progressivists, for at the stage of Romance, the child's nascent tendencies toward achieving intellectual development dominate, while in the stage of Precision the predominantly external demands for exact knowledge become the central focus. Where this progressivist ideal emphasized in Romance is followed by traditionalist imperatives in Precision, to complete the rhythmic cycle, in the stage of Generalization, a genuine harmony of both types of education results where the child's sense of what is intellectually and practically desirable is informed and satisfied by means of knowledge acquired through rigorous, disciplined learning.

Along these same lines, and as a more specific example, the philosophical problem of truth as it has been broached in the work of educational philosophers discussed earlier, shows how educational conflict can be recontextualized according to the notion of rhythmic process, and thus be open to some measure of harmony. Traditionalists tend to see truth primarily as that which is formulated as correct statements about what actually exists. It is in the stage of Precision where this view receives the greatest attention and appreciation: the object of learning here is exact knowledge and, at least in part, a correct understanding and propositional formulation of truths about existence and existent things. On the other hand, truth as it has been largely perceived by progressivists, is embodied not so much in statements reflecting the actual state of affairs, as it is embodied in the individual's response to the exigencies arising from particular situations. Therefore, what is "true" in one situation, that is, what is right and appropriate under one set of circumstances, may not be "true" when the situation changes. This type of truth expressed as responsive encounters of the individual finds its initial and primordial expression in the stage of Romance. And in the stage of Generalization the truth grasped as definite, or exact knowledge is blended with the truth expressed as wisdom in dealing with the immediate experiences of life. In the rhythmic process of learning, then, the student comes to embrace truth in both the traditionalist sense and in the progressivist sense, each somewhat independently in the stages of Romance and Precision respectively, then as a unity in the stage of Generalization.

Whitehead's description of that rhythmic process essential to the existence of all actual entities, and expressed in human educational experiences, allows these otherwise opposite viewpoints to be associated with the phases of an actual entity, and to coalesce within the whole dialectical occurrence, namely, the completed cycle of learning.

2. The religious quality of education

Whitehead provides, in addition to the notion of rhythmic cycle, another unique description of educational process which further supports a conjugation of the conflicting approaches of traditional and progressive education. He appears to blaze a new trail in educational theory, a trail in part characterized by his insistence that education, at its core, be "religious."[45] With this he transforms a view of education from the apparently myopic focus on teaching the content of a curriculum to a vision which accords the present its full depth of meaning, especially in so far as the quality of life it embodies is reflective of its entire past, and will affect its entire future. Such a vision, contemplated in all its implications is evocative of an unusual respect for the quality of the present, and an unusual sense of responsibility for its possibilities. According to this larger sense of religion advanced by Whitehead,[46] an education that is "religious" has two primary objectives: to foster a sense of both duty and reverence. He explains that "duty arises from our potential control over the course of events," and "the foundation of reverence is this perception, that the present holds within itself the complete sum of existence, backwards and forwards, that whole amplitude of time, which is eternity."[47] As this pertains to the religious quality of education, I believe, it supports a unity in theory and practice, based on a profound sense of the interrelatedness of past, present and future.

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[45] Aims of Education, p. 14. Although Whitehead's statement may bring to mind Eliot's discussion of religion and education referred to earlier, it should be clear that the context of Whitehead's religion is immensely larger than Eliot's, and thus bears virtually no comparison.

[46] A. N. Whitehead, Religion in the Making (New York: A Meridian Book, 1974), pp. 15-7. For a substantial account of Whitehead's theological views, see also Process and Reality, pp. 342-51 and Process Theology. Basic Writings, ed. Ewert H. Cousins (New York: Newman Press, 1971). However difficult it may be to fully grasp the meaning Whitehead ascribes to that which is religious, it certainly transcends the "trappings" of most aspects of common religious practice. Religion is associated, rather, with the "internal life of man." "Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness," the quality of which depends upon this "self-realization of existence."

Traditionalists and progressivists have understood the relations of the categories of past, present and future quite differently, and have so been divided in many areas educational thinking and practice. For example, traditionalists tend to emphasize past achievements in the arts and sciences, expecting that they will enhance the future simply by having students know the details of those successes. Information, it might be thought, has its own power to advance society and culture, and teachers have the responsibility to ensure students grasp a prescribed body of information generated by past discoveries. Progressivists, on the other hand, see that much of the past, especially the dull academic study of old ideas which have long faded from presentday relevance, has little importance for the future; what is important is the present, creative utilization of knowledge which will provide the student with skills that should ensure future successes in life. Progressivists tend to see the present, immediate experiences of the student as paramount; they are revered as both the testing ground for solutions to everyday problems and the preparation for future achievements.

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[47] Aims of Education, p. 14.

Whitehead, in his notion of education as religious, seems to provide a basis for bringing together a traditionalist sense of the importance which the past plays in the future, with a progressivist appreciation of the way present, immediate experiences of the student prepare him for the future. By applying these complex notions of Whitehead, we can see that both are inadequate, in that traditionalists tend to by-pass the importance that immediate experience can have in demonstrating the utilization of knowledge, and thus how it can help shape the future, while progressivists often ignore the depth of understanding past insights can bring to the present, and so also enrich future experiences. By valuing the full scope of past ideas, and by integrating them in appropriate ways with present experiences, these inadequacies found in both can be largely rectified, and the future in all its potentiality, at once both fragile and immense, can be respected to its proper extent in the present. From this we can see how Wegener is able to affirm as important goals of education the nurture of reverence for life along with intellectual development,[48] and Johnson, on a similar note, can see education's goal to be a "style" of living where "all phases of thought and action fit together in a harmonious fashion,"[49] and where knowledge is directly relevant to the present and future.[50]

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[48] "Alfred North Whitehead: an Implied Philosophy of School and Society," 207.

Two additional features of Whitehead's educational theory, based on his analysis of certain dangers in education, generate additional insight into the possible resolution to the conflict.

3. Inert ideas

Whitehead has maintained throughout his writing on educational theory a deep concern over the prevalence and consequences of "inert ideas." As early as 1916, Whitehead issued a warning in an address to the Mathematical Association, "In training a child to activity of thought, above all things we must be aware of what I will call 'inert ideas', that is to say, ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilized, or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations."[51] This inertia, symptomatic of the intellectual cancer of what he calls "mental dryrot," becomes the fate befalling those ideas which have once enjoyed the vitality and excitement accompanying a sense of having some importance to one's existence, but which have sadly atrophied through misuse into a state of stagnation and irrelevance.

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[49] Whitehead's Philosophy of Civilization, pp. 111-2.

[50] Ibid., p. 111.

[51] A. N. Whitehead, The Organization of Thought, Educational and Scientific (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1917), p. 4.

(Whitehead denotes "usefulness" in the broad sense of that which is related "to that stream, compounded of sense perceptions, feelings, hopes, desires, and of mental activities adjusting thought to thought, which forms our life.")[52] Such ideas slip from creative and useful involvement in life,[53] and degenerate into a dullness associated with mere pedantry and routine, into a languidness of intellectual numbness, and an ineffectualness due disconnected bits of information.[54]

In taking seriously the threat of inert ideas, Whitehead delineates some imperatives for education: "Do not teach too many subjects"; "What you teach, teach thoroughly." Further, Whitehead explains that this inertia must be countered through a master plan for schooling that sees all of its educational objectives unified under a curriculum designed by local staff and tailored to meet its own special needs.[55] With reference to Whitehead's broadly conceived agenda, R. L. Hamm describes an educational program that avoids inert ideas as one which ostensibly promotes creativity, sparks and nurtures students' interest, and fully grasps the importance of the power of ideas at work in the learning process. This type of education requires that ideas be solidly implanted in the concrete world, which can then lead to a "development of style," that being the ultimate goal of education and the evidence of creativity in its fullest expression. This style is expressed in the fashioning and restraining of the power of ideas to achieve particular intended aims (and thus Hamm also sees style as the "ultimate morality of mind.")[56] Education that fails to meet these fundamentally important objectives relegates schooling and learning to what Whitehead calls the "dung hill of inert ideas."[57]

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[52] Aims of Education, p. 3.

[53] Harold B. Dunkel, "Creativity and Education," Educational Theory Vol. 11, No. 4 (October 1961), 216.

[54] Aims of Education, pp. 1-3.

[55] Ibid., p. 13.

This type of inertia is the consequence, under certain conditions, facing both traditional and progressive education. On the one hand, some radical progressivists encourage students to choose and follow courses of study that satisfy only immediate interests and fancies. When this occurs, commonly, there is lack of direction toward depth and precision in knowledge, and that initial spark of interest is not sustained by a useful integration in life. As this isolation takes hold that spark soon diminishes and fades away. One is reminded of the biblical parable; some seeds of knowledge fall on stony, infertile ground. On the other hand, some intransigent traditionalists expect students to "absorb" a body of information consisting of reams of data, without any concern for its current relevance to their daily experiences;

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[56] Russell L. Hamm, Philosophy and Education. Alternatives in Theory and Practice (Dannville, Ill.: The Interstate Printers and Publishers Inc., 1974), pp. 181-3.

[57] Aims of Education, p. 13.

memorization and recitation are key in this process. Here again the seeds of knowledge begin to die because the disconnectedness from daily living leaves them without vitality. It is my contention that a deliberate plan to combat inert ideas incorporates certain ideals prized in both types of education. As Whitehead maintains, the enjoyment of learning must be matched by the "patient process of the mastery of the details."[58] If the student is to avoid inertia, he must engage the rigorous exercises of learning that resolutely move one along the difficult path required for a full and satisfying understanding. Inert ideas are avoided by embarking on a well-planned and rightly-conceived educational strategy that evokes student interest, grasps the usefulness of ideas, commits them to an intellectual clarity and precision, and firmly establishes those ideas as integrated elements in a wise and creative life.

Whitehead's description of inert ideas brings together the otherwise conflicting emphases we find in education concerning the natural, spontaneous interests of the student and the intellectual discipline required for both in-depth understanding and the appropriate application of ideas. The traditional emphasis on the latter, and the progressivist on the former are both required if such inert ideas are to be eliminated, and when educational programs remain hardened in either a traditionalist or a progressive mode, then the possibility for inertia threatens the immediate and (likely) the long-term educational goal of achieving an art of living that expresses both creativity and wisdom in most aspects of human endeavour.

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[58] Ibid., p. 32.

4. Soul murder

Education, for Whitehead, is not merely a matter of understanding and interrelating ideas as such, although ideas are its special focus. Education concerns all of life.[59] Thus the danger of inert ideas has an equally ominous concomitant in what Whitehead calls "soul murder." He sees the art of life manifested in the personal achievement and actualization of one's greatest potential in any particular situation. Along with the utilization of ideas, then, social interactions, sensual and emotional experiences, and the entire range of life's events come into play. All of these factors, Whitehead believes, in their unique configurations, compose the soul.

Whitehead's distinctive connotation of "soul" rests upon his rejection of the metaphysical dualism of mind and body (a striking feature in all aspects of his philosophy). Thus the term must not be confused with the classical Christian notion of soul as referring strictly to the "spiritual" dimensions of man. There is no isolated and independent existence, in his perception of things, of the material and the non-material elements of the universe. Although they can be distinguished within a process of becoming, they should not be understood as independent entities or events. Whitehead uses the notion of the soul to explain the manner in which ideas as a dimension of the actual world are creatively mediated and integrated by the individual. The soul is a veritable "society" of ideas, physical objects, emotions, hopes and intentions.[60] "All the emotions, and purposes, and enjoyments, proper to the individual existence of the soul are nothing other than the soul's reactions to this experienced world which lies at the base of the soul's existence."[61] In this sense, Whitehead explains, the world is gathered up within and constitutes the elements of the soul, what might also be described as the unique subjectivity of the individual as such.

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[59] Ibid., p. 39.

The broadest manifestation of "soul-life" appears in the unfolding drama of human civilization. In bold strokes, Whitehead has portrayed the story of civilized life, as it ebbs and flows, as it rises to and turns away from, then yet again attempts to attain the ideals of classical thinkers and writers.[62] The greatness of the human soul is seen in its ability, in due course, to evoke positive, fundamental changes to the way we live our lives, changes that, here and there, more closely approximate a purity of conduct, a favorable societal order, and the victory of persuasion over force.[63] Unity and harmony among all elements of one's experience, and between individuals involved in multitudinous ways in a present moment of experience, ensures that the human soul flourishes in its quest for greatness.

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[60] Modes of Thought, pp. 161-5; and A. N. Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas (New York: The Free Press, 1967), pp. 10-25.

[61] Modes of Thought, p. 163.

[62] Adventure of Ideas, p. 10-25.

As mentioned, the soul, like ideas, can be sapped of its vitality, and ultimately stripped of intensity of personal interest and purpose. Schools (and I suspect Whitehead would assume other institutions of society) under certain conditions could become instrumental in harming and deadening the soul. Where education, in practice and in theory, isolates the various fields of human knowledge, where education fails to promote a harmony among the different methods of learning and topics of study, and fails to relate knowledge in significant ways to the life of the learner, the human soul suffers great loss. Such conditions, which according to Whitehead are all too prevalent, can, on the part of the perpetrators of this type of education, lead to "soul murder." He notes, as an example of this threat, how the teaching of literature has in practice disregarded the importance of encouraging and fostering an inspiring encounter with literary works, emphasizing instead mere structure, grammar and facts.[64] Literature studied in such a manner has not produced enjoyment and has not enhanced the "imaginative world which is our life."[65] Although the function of literature is to stimulate enjoyment and to be appreciated for its powers of creativity and relaxation, Whitehead finds that the teaching of literature, particularly of the kind promoted in the major universities of England, has generally failed to generate these results among students, and thus has not met with much success. In the final analysis, to his way of thinking, this is not merely a failure, but a crime. "The great English universities, under whose direct authority school-children are examined in plays of Shakespeare, to the certain destruction of their enjoyment, should be prosecuted for soul-murder."[66]

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[63] Ibid., p. 25.

[64] Aims of Education, p. 56.

Other educational theorists have picked up on this type of analysis. Johnson, for instance, has extended Whitehead's notion of soul murder that is applied to the teaching of literature to explain more broadly the consequences of the fragmentation of learning in formal schooling that stems from a disjointed curriculum. The bits and scraps of subject matter are presented to uninterested students, who are then forced to recall for examination purposes those assorted bits and scraps that remain meaningless and irrelevant to practical living. Education, he suggests, ought to seek out and establish a unity to the whole gamut of valuable learning experiences, rather than divide and isolate those experiences.[67] Jasper Hunt and Glenn Webster, too, recently have examined Whitehead's notion of soul murder as it relates to contemporary education, and show how this notion, consistent with Whitehead's general metaphysics, supports an integrated curriculum. As they put it:

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[65] Ibid., p. 57.

[66] Ibid.

> Whitehead uses the term "soul" to refer to the enduring personality, that route of experient occasions which is regnant within the life of the individual. The soul is not a stuff which has experiences as its accidents; it is the ongoing process of experience itself. To block experience is to murder the soul.[68]

Since the soul exists as the temporal unity of instances of experience interrelated according to an individual's self-conceived design, they suggest that the soul thrives on a welter of relevant experiences being available to it for integration, for its growth and progressive development, for its very life. To teach a disjointed admixture of subjects divorced from any clear relevance or pattern comprehensible to the student serves to "starve" and weaken the soul.

Whitehead's dictum against soul murder provides additional bases for drawing together elements in educational theory that are otherwise opposed. In the first place, a traditional approach to education concentrates on intellectual understanding facilitated to a large extent by the grouping

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[67] Whitehead's Philosophy of Civilization, pp. 117-8.

[68] Jasper Hunt, Jr. and Glenn Webster, "Soul Murder, Prehensions, and Symbolic Reference: Some Reflections on Whitehead's Philosophy of Education," Educational Theory Vol. 32, No. 4 (October 1982), 339.

together of ideas according to subject matter. Once ideas have been segmented this way, it is thought they can be more readily understood and remembered by the student who is not distracted by interests outside this focus of attention. By contrast, a progressive approach sees the business of education as encouraging and facilitating students' experience in a wide variety of subject areas, preferably at the same time, which enriches the learning experience with an interrelatedness of ideas and a heightened curiosity; the inordinant valuation of textbook ideas and resultant devaluation of personal learning experiences, it is thought, leads to blockages in creativity and personal development. To guard against harm being done to the soul, aspects of both types of educational approaches should be avoided, and aspects from both adopted.

Traditionalists are in danger of segregating learning experiences to the extent where units of study can become isolated from each other, and the type of learning which has a vibrant relevancy to life's experiences can be passed over. Progressive education, too, can be dangerous, in that it treats only superficially certain topics of study because of a student's dispersion of interests fostered in the "open" learning experience. It leaves untapped the vast capacity of students to deepen their understanding, and to energize and intensify life's experiences. But inasmuch as these results should be avoided, Whitehead would maintain, however, that the depth of analysis found in a traditonalist concentration of study in a specialized area can be highly beneficial to the student's overall sense of enjoyment in learning, and a progressivist application of ideas to one's immediate experience in its many facets can enhance the development of intellectual powers. On this score, then, a unity is desirable in an education designed to enhance the life of the soul, where a complete range of experiences are formed and reformed in ever more productive and meaningful combinat~~ions~~.

Whitehead's educational theory with its suggestive implications for practice thus contains important insights which can be used to bring together views that otherwise remain isolated, if not in outright conflict. A consideration of educational rhythm, education as religious, inert ideas and soul murder reveals how, from a Whiteheadian perspective, the conflict between traditional and progressive education can (and must) be resolved within a dialectical framework. Whitehead's method involves a recontextualizing of those opposing views according to a notion of reality more comprehensive than that found in either traditional or progressive education. For a further accounting of Whitehead's notion of reality, and a more indepth analysis of the issues touched upon here, we can turn to his systematic metaphysics in which emerges a full rendering of reality as a dialectical process.

C. Whiteheadian Metaphysics Having Implications for Educational Philosophy

In Whitehead's metaphysics we come to explore not only the basic philosophical differences between traditional and progressive education, but come to see more fully the philosophical utilization of the notion of dialectic, and to anticipate a more radical solution to the conflict. The focus of this turn in discussion will be on the general features of Whitehead's metaphysics,[69] his cosmology, and his account of the nature of man. Under these headings, those issues identified earlier as points of contention in the traditional-progressive conflict can be shown to be complementary, dialectical components in a unified educational philosophy.

1. The general approach

Whitehead's general philosophical system would seem to provide a framework consisting of wide-ranging ideas broad enough to unify the conflicting educational philosophies of traditional and progressive education. On a very general level, Whitehead combines elements of a rationalism and an empiricism in what he calls his "philosophy of organism." Basic to this philosophy is a conception of reality whose most complete and most concrete manifestation is experience, and from which follows his basic philosophical maxim: that immediately apprehended experience is, and should be, the source of all philosophical thinking; philosophical thinking stems from the attempt at generalized statements as to the nature of things as experienced. It is thus, from experience, and to experience, that philosophical inquiry finds its genesis and ultimate relevance, but between the starting point in experience, and the return to experience with an enlarged understanding of it, there is the imaginative, adventuresome, generalized and particularized account of reality. These two core elements in his thought, that is, an empiricism grounded in personal experience and a rationalism that intends to take stock of experience,[70] provide an fundamental impetus for expecting a possible unity in educational theory that has been roughly divided along rationalist-empiricist lines. The philosophical case for a unity now becomes clearer with an explication of some of the details of his metaphysics.

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[69] For a more complete account of Whitehead's systematic metaphysics, see Understanding Whitehead, Whitehead's Philosophy of Civilization, and A. H. Johnson, Whitehead's Theory of Reality (New York: Dover Publications, 1962).

a. Reality from a Whiteheadian perspective

Whitehead's philosophy of organism depicts moments of human experience as an interrelation and unity of diverse types of "feeling," including, along with sensory awareness, conceptual apprehensions. This is the world of multi-faceted experience, and for Whitehead, it composes the real world of human beings. It is this world of human experiences that can be enriched by a rationality that analyzes and attempts to explain it conceptually in sets of terms and relations. In demonstrating this, Whitehead provides such a systematic accounting of reality in Process and Reality, with an intended view to valuing more deeply and benefiting more substantially from life's experiences.[71] Thus, from the outset a mutuality becomes apparent between that vast world of experience and the intelligible awareness of that world mediated through rational reflection.

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[70] Bernard J. Lee, "Two Process Theologies," Theological Studies Vol. 45, No. 2 (June 1984), 307-19. Lee explains that theology based on Whitehead's philosophy has an empirical side and a rational side. Lee's reading of Whitehead, I believe, is illuminating of the two similar emphases in his thought on education.

Since reality, for Whitehead, is the world of experience, which includes the activity of rational reflection, it, as such, provides a comphrehensive horizon in which to see directly how traditional and progressive education may find a fundamentally important, common ground. To recall, traditional education has generally regarded the rational comprehension of ideas to be the primary goal of education, without much concern given to the relevance those ideas might have, or should have, to the present, immediate experience of the student. Progressive education, on the other hand, certainly in its extreme forms, purports immediately apprehended experience to be the dominant focus in education, while denigrating the rational analysis of experience where, it is thought, that such analysis detracts from the value and vividness of experience.[72] A Whiteheadian depiction of reality suggests that this point of conflict stems from a falsly conceived differentiation and disjuncture between experience and rationality, since both phenomena, as they are referred to by traditionalists and progressivists, in actuality are aspects of a unity of types and occasions of experience. Rationailty, in Whitehead's view, is a dimension of experience and not additional to it. As a component of experience, it can enhance the usefulness and overall value of the whole occasion of experience so prized by progressivists. Where immediately apprehended experience lacks a developed rational component in the learning situation its greater educational value remains unfilled. By the same token, a rationality that occurs without explicit regard for immediately apprehended experience actually tends to foster an education lacking in wholeness and authenticity; it is an education not true to the unity of experience that naturally integrates experiential immediacy and rationality.

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[71] Ibid., 307.

Reality described in these Whiteheadian categories is constituted by at least two dimensions of experience, which, together and only together, can generate a balanced and flourishing life. Educational practice, theory and philosophy should not emphasize one dimension to the detriment of the other, but rather strike a balance that fully recognizes the function and value of each. This, in my view, can readily be accomplished if a traditional emphasis on rational analysis and a progressive focus on immediately apprehended experience is integrated within an educational system that appreciates and requires such complementarity. And what is more, a unity of educational theory and philosophy based on Whitehead's perception of reality is not merely an attractive option, but the structure of reality, and an education attuned to that reality demands a unity.

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[72] Philosophy and Education. Alternatives in Theory and Practice, pp. 111-3.

b. A broadened pragmatism

Whitehead's perception of reality, to some extent, has been influenced by the philosophies of pragmatists Williams James and John Dewey.[73] Although a cursory analysis of Whitehead's educational philosophy may place Whitehead in the progressive camp because of his commonly understood association with pragmatism, this would be a mistake, since his pragmatism displays unique features which set him apart. In my view, Whitehead pushes pragmatic thinking to its limit, and in doing so, embraces some aspects of the philosophical idealism that pragmatists have objected to, and which have been associated with certain traditionalist modes of education. It is this larger conception of pragmatism that provides more philosophical support for seeing traditional and progressive education not in conflict but in dialectic.

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[73] Modes of Thought, p. 3, and Process and Reality, p. xii.

Generally, pragmatism regards human experience associated with "workable" situations as the central focus of philosophical inquiry. But more than simply emphasizing "what works" in particular situations, Whitehead sees pragmatic thinking as "an appeal to that self-evidence which sustains itself in civilized experience."[74] What is important, then, is the manner in which individual and social life is expressed, and how ideas and systems of ideas, values and order, explain and promote the highest potentials of life. Certainly "what works" in experience is crucial, but it is further recognized that ideas give rise to ideals which can "work" to transform experience in the direction of its finest potentials.

Certain corollaries to this broadened view of pragmatism appear, for example, in Whitehead's educational philosophy, such as has been explained by Burnett.

> In the broadest sense, the thoughts [evident in cultivated society] are concerned with "culture" ... namely, with the utilization of "what is best in the past" in such a fashion that problems of the present are effectively solved and the best of the past is improved. It is not the fact that something is simply the best of the past which makes it relevant for curriculum; rather, it is that the best of the past is (in Whitehead's view) often the best beginning point for formulating effective principles and actions. There is thus a type of pragmatic test to be met by traditional ideas, and Whitehead is aware that tradition must be modified if present problems are to be solved effectively.[75]

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[74] Modes of Thought, p. 106.

[75] "Whitehead on the Aims of Schooling," 275-6.

Thus, the pragmatism advanced by Whitehead conjoins thought and action in a manner where the concepts of the past are creatively involved with the needs and appropriations arising within the current situation. Consequently, central themes from both traditional and progressive education can be appreciated in the actions of the present. Proponents of traditional education have stressed that curriculum design must recognize the importance of ideas and ideals of the past, particularly those which have produced great historical advancements, while the proponents of progressive education have emphasized the present moment with its potential enjoyments and satisfactions that can be realized within the proper learning environment. The otherwise conflicting educational theories, within a Whiteheadian educational "pragmatic" philosophy, emerge as a dialectical configuration that appreciates both that which works in the present moment and those ideas and ideals of the past that improve the present with added dimensions of wisdom.

With Whitehead's basic philosophical stance providing a preliminary philosophical glimpse of the dialectical treatment of educational conflict, further details of this approach can now be elucidated, and thus be shown to more completely address a possible resolution to the conflict.

2. Cosmology

The history of philosophy meets with a new turn in Whitehead's work, or to borrow the metaphor of Susan Langer (who, incidently, dedicates her philosophical book on symbolism and art to Whitehead), we see philosophy transposed to a new key.[76] Overtures to this new mode of thinking have been detected in Whitehead's general approach, but now explored more fully in some of the major themes in his metaphysical system. For this we turn primarily to his "Essay in Cosmology," as Process and Reality is so subtitled, in which the polymorphic character of the universe is set forth in one explanatory schema. Two aspects of his cosmology directly relevant to educational conflict will be considered: first, a more detailed account of reality as it pertains to the process of prehension; and secondly, his perception of the nature of understanding itself.

a. Bipolarity of prehension

As noted in discussing his educational theory, Whitehead sees the universe to be composed of basic real things called actual entities. Earlier, the general pattern of process that constitutes actual entities was discussed; here the focus will be on the nature and significance of the prehending itself.[77] An analysis of the elements involved in the complex composition of an actual entity must focus on prehensions since, simply stated, they constitute the manner in which all components in the universe are "felt", that is, eliminated, or accepted and ordered as a moment of experience. Prehensions are occurrences of "emotion and purpose, and valuation, and causation."[78] They express the overall character of the actual entity which they also serve to create. Prehensions involved in any occasion of experience are contingent upon an interdependency among all elements constituent of the experience, both on the individual level where they are arranged in relation to the anticipated whole, completed entity, and on a "societal" level. On this enlarged societal plane, actual entities influence each other and can be fused together in new combinations, whose conjugations compose a new, real entity, called by Whitehead a nexus, (the plural being nexūs).[79] These most fundamental, irreducible things of the universe, actual entities and nexūs of actual entities are the foundation of, and the factual basis to, Whitehead's cosmology,[80] and his resulting philosophy of organism is largely given to an explanation of existence in terms of this lively prehending process. Whitehead further describes prehension as a process of "feeling" whereby various data are incorporated into the occurrence of an actual entity. "[F]eeling is the term used for the basic generic operation of passing from the objectivity of the data to the subjectivity of the actual entity in question."[81] It is this process of feeling, or prehending, that gives rise to "concrescence," that is, to the accepting or rejecting, ordering and valuing of data in an actual entity.[82]

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[76] Susan K. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key. A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art (New York: Mentor, 1951).

[77] Cf. My section on inert ideas.

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[78] Process and Reality, p. 19.

[79] Ibid., p. 20.

[80] Ibid.

These critically important features of Whitehead's cosmology have a direct bearing on a solution to the traditional-progressive conflict. Whitehead's notion of actual entities supports certain progressive tendencies in education, while maintaining the traditional aspirations that education be conceptually rich. Harry S. Broudy, for example, suggests that if the learning process were explicitly and soundly based on feeling, thereby recognizing and understanding the prehension process, a more insightful and humanizing balance can be achieved (in the sense that learning is in tune with the way we really are as human beings), between the polarities of concreteness and abstraction, of involvement and disengagement.[83] Broudy, overall, argues for a type of education that encourages the more strongly and existential decision-oriented involvement of the student in his own education, that appreciates more widely the aesthetic dimension, and that adopts an integrated, thematized value theory.[84] The entire prehension process supports these objectives, and thus also a unification of the traditional emphasis on abstraction, disengagement and "objective" knowledge, with that broad project of a progressivist student-oriented teaching.

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[81] Ibid., p. 40.

[82] Understanding Whitehead, p. 39.

[83] Harry S. Broudy, "Actual Entities and the Learning Process," Educational Theory Vol. 11, No. 4 (October 1961), 227.

Another characteristic of his description of the bipolarity evident in the prehending process serves to strengthen a dialectical compatibility of traditional and progressive education. This bipolarity is brought to light, at least on one point of discussion, where Whitehead addresses one of the great conundrums in philosophical thought, that "the things which are temporal arise by their participation in the things which are eternal."[85] His unravelling of this apparent paradox rests upon the view that prehension involves both physical and mental "sides."[86] The physical side concerns the prehending of data constituting the actual world, while the mental side involves a prehension of ideas (what Whitehead calls "eternal objects.")

> Thus the process of becoming is dipolar, (i) by reason of its qualification by the determinateness of the actual world, and (ii) by its conceptual prehensions of the indeterminateness of eternal objects. The process is constituted by the influx of eternal objects into a novel determinateness of

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[84] _Ibid_., 226-7, 268.

[85] _Process and Reality_, p. 40.

[86] _Ibid_., p. 45. It should be noted that "physical", for Whitehead, is not simply "matter", but should be interpreted as "actuality".

> feeling which absorbs the actual world into a novel actuality.[87]

In such a way, then, both temporality and eternality figure into the array of possibilities for process.

In this explanation of the dialectical structure of polarities I find an important development in the resolution of the conflict in contemporary education, for here we can see that, where progressivists tend to emphasize one pole, the prehending of the actual (physical) world, albeit it often without a full appreciation of the intellectual component, traditionalists tend to emphasize the other consisting of conceptual prehension. Among the former, the student's environment is of great importance, including his social interactions, artistic awareness and appreciation, and the host of opportunities to explore the world around him and to disclose his personal responses to that world. Traditionalists, on the other hand tend to stress the importance of eternal objects, seeking to afford students the opportunity to develop a high level of intellectual reasoning through the grasp and contemplation of ideas. Whitehead's understanding of actual entities takes into account both the world of changing situations requiring a creative process of individual response, through choices and options, to reach a present satisfaction in life, as well as the world of eternal objects that span time and contexts so as to connect the past with the present and entertain possibilities for future existence. And inasmuch as the paradoxical realities of change and permanence are accounted for through a bipolarity within the prehension process, so these otherwise conflicting emphases can be seen as integral components to a complete educational experience, and thus is also demonstrated the further substantive philosophical basis for their unity stemming from the character of existence itself.

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[87] Ibid.

Whitehead's explanation of actual existence in terms of a prehension process leads one to consider another philosophical problem related to the conflict in education, and where again a resolution might be found. The problem is the long-standing conflict over seeing reality as essentially mind or as matter (and so is generated the great division in philosophical thought -- if it can be so simply stated -- between idealism and "scientism"). The great bane of philosophical thinking, according to Whitehead, has been the stringent opposition between two basic types of modern thinking. On the one hand, certain thinkers have regarded nature, that is the physical world, as the sole reality, and the mind as illusory, while others see mind as the sole reality and physical nature as mere appearance. "The doctrine that I am maintaining is that neither physical nature nor life can be understood unless we fuse them [nature and mind] together as essential factors in the composition of 'really real' things...."[88] The unity which Whitehead proposes actually entails an expansion of the notion of life to include physical and non-physical realities, which, brought together in the process of "creative advance", results in an occasion of experience.[89] It is the occasion of experience that fuses together mind and matter, and through this, Whitehead's expanded notion of human life, the philosophical bifurcation of existence can and, he believes, must be mended. The basic philosophical postures of traditional and progressive education follow this similar pattern of division which, too, can and must be mended; a fusion of mind and matter occurs in a unified educational philosophy that comes to terms with that which is really real, namely, the prehension process. From this account of the process of prehending, the more specific question of Whitehead's philosophy of mind can now be considered.

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[88] Modes of Thought, p. 150.

b. Whiteheadian philosophy of mind

Since education has generally been viewed as having to do with mental development to some extent, whether that be the intellectual grasp of existing notions and concepts, or the unencumbered pursuit and development in formal schooling situations of a student's own interest, or as Whitehead suggests, the "acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge,"[90] certain issues addressed in a philosophy of mind are drawn into the discussion at hand. Specifically, the questions of the nature of understanding and the knowledge of existent things in the universe have special significance. These are understood in terms of his cosmology, especially where he sets forth his notion of conceptual feeling as integral to the cosmos. Although conceptual feeling can be distinguished from the physical aspects of an actual entity, the two must not be divorced, since it is of the organic nature basic to these elements of an entity to function interdependently, and to exist as a whole.

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[89] Ibid.

[90] Aims of Education, p. 4.

Whitehead maintains that in the composition of actual entities the variety in types of elements comes to be related or interconnected in a way that is affected by conceptual feelings -- in human experience the effect of which is highly significant to the overall character of the actual entity. "The primary data are always actual entities absorbed into feeling in virtue of certain universals shared alike by the objectified actuality and the experient subject."[91] In this assertion, Whitehead broaches the philosophical question of the relation of the universal to the particular, here roughly meaning the relationship between ideas and the things that exist in the concrete world, and with this arises the epistemological question of the nature of understanding, of which Whitehead distinguishes two modes.[92] There is one "mode of comprehension" which seeks to differentiate the various elements constituting an actual entity by identifying and exploring the internal relationships of those elements as they compose the totality of the entity. Another mode regards the entity as a whole in its relation to its environment. The one mode, seeking an understanding of internal components structured according to the unique processes operative within the entity, must be complemented by the other mode of understanding concerned with the causal relationships between the actual entity and its environmental influences.[93] This characterization of internal and external modes account for both the creative process that congeals data in the formation process of an actual entity and the manner in which conceptual abstractions become involved in the process.

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[91] Process and Reality, p. 49.

[92] Modes of Thought, p. 42.

More specifically on the nature of understanding itself, Whitehead explains it as the self-evidence of things, which is to say, the recognition of the way actual entities form and project themselves in the universe. This recognition is felt as both a sense of "completion" and a sense of "penetration." The sense of "completion" relates to the wholeness of the actual entity, that being a feeling of its unified totality. The sense of "penetration" concerns the perception (however dimly) of the actual entity in its "unexplored relationships with things beyond."[94] In order that the "experience of intelligibility" be fully satisfying, both the sense of

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[93] Ibid., pp. 45-6.

[94] Ibid., pp. 47-8, 50.

"completion" and the sense of "penetration" should enter into the experience. As Whitehead maintains, self-evidence is understanding, and such understanding which can be said to grow and flourish "senses" both the wholeness of an actual entity as well as its relationships with other things in the universe.[95] This, Whitehead's philosophy of mind (in a highly simplified overview), by referring to conceptual feeling, and the two modes of comprehension, along with the senses of completion and penetration, further substantiates a dialectical resolution to the conflict in educational theory.

A major source of contention between traditional and progressive education centers on this question of the nature of knowledge. Traditional education has been concerned mainly with ideas and their ultimate importance in sustaining Western civilization. Its perspective is that education ought to instill a knowledge of the principles governing the nature of things, that is, a knowledge of why things are the way they are. These principles, it is thought, constitute the absolute, immutable truths of the universe that should explain all aspects of life and knowledge from the sciences to religion. The ultimate goal in this type of education is "objectivity," that is, the achieving of knowledge that is not "tainted" by individual biases and mere personal opinion. Science has its laws and religion its final, permanent, unchanging truths. On the other hand, progressive education views human knowledge as not so much concerned with the intellectual grasp of certain absolute propositions about the universe, but the achieving of ever greater degrees of the type of knowledge primarily based on personal, first-hand experience. In Whitehead, both views of knowledge, in isolation, are at best partial; if not detrimental in some respects, to attaining that essential, comprehensive epistemic objective of education.

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[95] Whitehead has been criticized for an apparently misconstrued account of conceptual knowledge. Victor Lowe, in Understanding Whitehead, has noted this apparent deficiency and reasoned that it may be due to the metaphysical, rather than epistemological foundations of perceptual knowledge expounded in his philosophy. "I think that Whitehead also handled the conceptual element in perceptual knowledge on the wrong plane -- metaphysical rather than epistemological. It is curious that a thinker who enriched philosophy with so many new concepts should have said so little about the nature of concepts: they are 'merely the analytic functioning of universals'... In human knowledge, however, they play a role which he did not fully appreciate." (p. 377). The problem, Lowe believes, is in Whitehead's tendency to ontologize concepts and not treat them as special occurrences in human thought (pp. 378-9). I suggest Lowe, himself, does not fully appreciate the far-reaching significance of Whitehead's perception of understanding as an ontological reality, which in my view bears some similarities, in profundity if not the widespread influence, to Heidegger's notions of "self-showing", "hermeneutics", and the "disclosedness of Being." cf. Heidegger's "Being and Time: Introduction", in Martin Heidegger, Basic Writings, edited by David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 37-93.

Another aspect of Whitehead's philosophy of mind and his cosmology provides strong support for a unified educational theory inasmuch as it would be a unification appreciative of both intellectual and intuitive knowledge, both the knowledge of explicit detail (which is especially emphasized in traditional education), and the knowledge of the "vague totality" of reality (commonly advanced through more progressive modes). A unity so envisaged stems from, in Whitehead's philosophy, an accounting of eternal objects, here bearing some resemblance to Plato's forms, and to a commonsense notion of ideas and concepts, which are integrated into that process resulting in actual entities through the blending of eternal objects with other data that belong to the concrete world. For Whitehead, knowledge is a consequence of the interrelatedness of both intuitive and intellectual aspects.

At cross-purposes to a unified theory, traditional education tends to isolate for the learning process eternal objects from other data constituting an actual entity which results in the deliberate disconnection of abstractions from their concreteness in experiential involvement, and progressive education myopically concentrates on the disclosure of the actual world through immediate experience, but often leaving it unilluminated by important conceptual truths. Thus, a split in educational philosophy occurs over whether knowledge is tantamount to the intellectual grasp of highly generalized propositions, or found in the intuitive interrelatedness of immediate experience as a whole, single event. Whitehead's notions of conceptual feeling and eternal objects transcend this division in favour of an epistemological union of the intellectual and analytical activities that produce a body of precise propositional knowledge with the integrative functions eliciting a sense of how knowledge is evoked in the actual experiences of life. Both exact knowledge and intuitive knowledge should be interwoven, according to Whitehead's philosophy of mind, in an in-depth and broadened understanding of things in their totality.

The fusion of the physical and conceptual components in a moment of experience is at the heart of the possible unification of traditional and progressive education. The two modes of comprehension, the sense of completion and penetration, intuitive and intellectual knowledge, are united as dialectical components operative in the process constitutive of actual entities , and ultimately constitutive of the cosmos overall. Where contemporary educational theory struggles with the conflict between traditional and progressive adaptations of differing philosophies of mind and learning, a Whiteheadian approach requires that each epistemological viewpoint be given due emphasis in the overall learning experience if that learning experience is to be best suited to the experiences of the student and be attuned to the realities of existence itself.

From Whitehead's accounting of cosmology, and its support of a unified educational theory, and philosophy, the focus can now be extended to other details of his philosophy which further establish the basis for, and characterization of, a dialectical unity.

3. Nature of man

Although an explanation of the nature of understanding and the emergence of knowledge relates to an exposition of the nature of man, for purposes of showing Whitehead's broad conception of "understanding" as an important component in the emergence of all actual events, in the previous section I have set it within the broad context of his cosmology. This section serves to amplify the more specifically human manifestation of understanding,[96] as well as related topics considered more generally in connection with Whitehead's cosmologically-based philosophy of mind. The issues discussed here include an account of human experience, the process of valuation, and the meaning of progress.

a. General account of the nature of man

According to Whitehead, the animal species achieves a new level of development in the human genus with its unique ability to conceptually entertain a host of possibilities to propel life toward a higher plane, a plane where the central activity is the perception and expression of "novelty." This activity appears to be double-pronged. On the one hand, novelty involves the perception and anticipation of new possibilities for actual expressions and, on the other hand, involves the concretization of those possibilities in new occurences of life. The anticipatory dimension of novelty is one aspect of the "novelty of feeling" through which is invoked a vast array of choice and opportuniy, and with that a sense of value, a sense of morality, religious sentiments, a sense of beauty, and the desire for conscious awareness and understanding.[97] And further, it is also

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[96] Modes of Thought, p. 26.

> . . . the nature of feeling to pass into expression. Thus the expression of these various feelings produces the history of mankind as distinct from the narrative of animal behaviour. History is the record of the expressions of feelings peculiar to humanity.[98]

A novelty of feeling, then, occurs when a certain configuration of those alternatives for existence acquire actual concrete existence. Whitehead explains that human life flourishes in the entertainment and testing of that which is alternative, that which is the possible ideal, especially as it might enhance the overall quality of enjoyment of life beyond the activities of survival, to see the achievements of "artistic" excellence.

Now to apply this description to the present concern with educational philosophy in conflict, novelty of feeling generates strong impluses toward both anticipation and concretization, or to put it another way, toward the ideal and the actual. These impulses are mutually dependent, and essential to any actual expression of human life. Thus, education as a human activity should unfold as a creative force that promotes our humanness with respect to both development of our anticipatory capabilities in envisaging possibility, and with respect to the development of skills in expressing possibility in concrete situations of daily life. To characterize very broadly the educational agendas at odds, the traditional often sees humanness closely related to intellectual ability and performance, while the progressive correlates humanness more with the enjoyment of a wide scope of life experiences. In human life where novelty of feeling is the benchmark, Whitehead would maintain that both characterizations of human life are essential for a picture of humanness in its fullness. On this basic question, then, traditional and progressive education can and must be harmonized.

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[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid., pp. 26-7.

b. Notion of experience and valuation

The notion of novelty of feeling gives rise to the further question of "importance" which governs the characterization of experience, namely, how the elements of the process are so configured. To recall, actual entities vary in importance and function,[99] and as actual instances of human life, on account of novelty of feeling, assume a mode of functioning of a very high grade. The qualities of this high grade of existence may be described in terms of the "character" of experience, of which Whitehead has distinguished three components that, together, compose its totality: (i) the actualized data presented by past occurrences within the universe, (ii) the pure potentialities of those data for future expressions of life, and (iii) the satisfaction, what is also called an immediate feeling of self-enjoyment, springing from the unification of data with possibility. Now to this explanation of the character of a drop of human experience is added the important element of aim.

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[99] Process and Reality, p. 18.

> By this aim is meant the exclusion of the boundless wealth of alternative potentiality, and the inclusion of that definite factor of novelty which constitutes the selected way of entertaining those data in that process of unification.[100]

Aim concerns a particular inclusion and arrangement of data and ideas with the intention of best suiting the survival and well-being of the actual entity under given conditions. The enjoyment that is generated by achieving this aim is not necessarily an emotional response of pleasure, but encompasses a more complex mode of enjoyment pertaining to the basic experience of existence itself, of first surviving, and beyond this, a self-enjoyment stemming from attaining some significant potential.[101]

With this notion of aim, valuation is seen to be a critically important feature in any instance of human experience, in any instance of novelty of feeling. Whitehead further describes the aiming at self-enjoyment as an embracing of a sense of the totality of one's existence, namely, a sense of the complete, unified occasion of experience, including a perception of its components directly contributing to that unity of occasion. Consequently, it can be said that "at the base of our existence is the sense of 'worth'."[102]

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[100] Modes of Thought, p. 152.

[101] Process and Reality, p. 9.

> The fundamental basis of this description is that our experience is a value experience, expressing a vague sense of maintenance or discard; and that this value experience differentiates itself in the sense of many existences with value experience; and that this sense of the multiplicity of value experiences again differentiates it into the totality of value experience, and the many other value experiences, and the egotistic value experience. There is the feeling of the ego, the others, the totality.[103]

So both with the sense of worth that takes into account the totality of things, and with the element of aim involved in the actualization process, human experience is through and through a valuation experience.

Various scholars and educational theorists have applied the Whiteheadian notion of experience and valuation to a description of the basic purpose of education. Burnett, for one, sees that a student, of his own initiative, can and should employ the opportunities in schooling to develop his own "art of life," according to his evaluation of such opportunities. Utilizing the provisions of schooling employs a "sense of values which demands of the individual incredible labour toward the acquisition of value."[104] Johnson, as another, has noted that a trained intellect is crucial to the maintenance of life's supreme values, those values being critically important elements in the struggle for survival.[105] And Brumbaugh maintains that education ought to enhance the ability, and to promote the capacity, of students to create and incorporate values into their experiences.[106] Besides these educational applications of Whitehead's view of experience and valuation, I believe this notion of the value experience has direct relevance to a resolution of the persisting conflict in educational theory.

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[102] Modes of Thought, p. 109.

[103] Ibid., p. 110.

[104] "Whitehead on the Aims of Schooling," p. 271.

First, with respect to the human expression of values, it has been noted that positions in contemporary educational theory sharply diverge. Proponents of traditional education have generally regarded value as based on unchanging ideals expressed as abstract propositions, and partially mirrored in the concrete world of human beings who, accordingly, order and make sense of their lives. On the other hand, those espousing a progressivist view see value based not on unchanging, permanent ideals, but created through the fluctuating preferences, hopes and desires through which humans respond to specific, concrete situations of life. This aspect of educational conflict can be negotiated in terms of Whitehead's perception that valuation, due to its intrinsic involvement in the process of existence, occurs in any and all human experience. With Whitehead, value is not an addition to experience, but an inextricable, necessary element in the constitution of experience as such. Valuation, manifest as "aim" and worth, has fundamental significance to humans, who are purposefully integrated actual entities in each new moment of experience. In the human experience, valuations are, for the most part, intellectual perceptions expressed concretely in the attitudes, preferences, emotions and actions of ongoing individual life, both as responses to immediate situations and as the character of one's overall art of life. Thus, a Whiteheadian understanding of the expression of human value affirms the importance of the conceptuality of value -- and hence the importance of intellectual activity in the valuation process -- and affirms with equal strength the importance of the creative expression of value in daily life. In this way, a sense of the traditional notion of value with its emphasis on intellectual perceptions, and the progressive, pragmatic concern that values be inextricably tied to practical affairs, are both upheld.

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[105] Whitehead's Philosophy of Civilization, p. 112.

[106] Whitehead, Process Philosophy and Education, p. 124.

Secondly, traditional and progressive education differ with respect to the source of value, that is to say, whether values emanate from a realm transcendent of temporal-spacial contexts, or whether values are entirely bounded by the local, immediate situations in which they are generated. A typically traditional philosophy of education regards values as a reflection of an unchanging and timeless ideal order intrinsic to the structure of the universe. Although values may be expressed in terms of realities experienced in the daily lives of human beings, their origin remains within the domain of the ideal and the Absolute. Progressivists, typically, tend to see values as individual creations, derived not from any transcendent realm, but stemming from personal or communal, tried and true, solutions to practical problems, and arising from aspirations individually felt for subsequent experiences. As circumstances change, so do values. For Whitehead, value is objectively existent -- situated within the actuality of every occurrence of experience, but as an integral component of the primary shaping force in, and not as a consequence of, the emergence of that occurrence of experience. In this way, Whitehead regards all experiences as value experiences.[107] The gulf between the axiologies of traditional and progressive education, in terms of the source of value, can thus be bridged, in that Whitehead's approach affirms that values, in enjoying an enduring abstract existence, are dependent upon that existence finding expression within the concrete world of actual entities, perhaps most dramatically depicted in human experiences.

c. Human progress and creativity

That world of human experience is the stage on which is played out the drama of human progress, a drama which, as has been seen, is interpreted in radically different ways in educational philosophy. Progress, for traditionalists, consists of a new generation's acceptance, in attitude and mode of behaviour, of the ideal norms of society as expressed primarily in its classical writings. Progressivists, on the other hand, see progress largely in terms of an individual's increasingly autonomous thinking and behaviour. By introducing Whitehead's notion of creative advance, a perspective on progress can emerge which, I believe, affirms in some respects, both views.

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[107] Modes of Thought, p. 110.

Whitehead describes the process of an instance of human experience coming into existence as, "the creative advance into novelty."[108] This process, he suggests, has both negative and positive aspects. From a negative perspective, human experience is not always an occasion of successful, productive creative advance, for always over the domain of human activity looms the possibility of failure to maintain vibrant life, whereupon staleness sets in and atrophy spreads to establish the decline.

> And this fatigue is nothing other than the creeping growth of anaesthesia, whereby that social group is gradually sinking towards nothingness... There is merely a slow paralysis of surprise. And apart from surprise, intensity of feeling collapses.[109]

In such an event where human activity is not creative beyond mere continuity, and does not embrace novelty and the excitement of creativity, the process of existence becomes static, deadening, and eventually lifeless. (The results of which, to recall, are inert ideas and death to the soul). Creative advance, then, is a turning away from this type of existence leading ultimately to personal and social paralysis and decay.

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[108] Process and Reality, p. 128.

[109] Adventures of Ideas, p. 286.

In positive terms, creative advance promotes a wholeness of experience where all the elements in experience harmonize in the production of new occasions of experience, and attains significant novelty through actively seeking the highest possible state of well-being and enjoyment. Ideas disclosing new possibilities for the entity's existence overall, and allowing it to actualize its potentialities become critically important to positive creative advance. Those ideas, through an interplay and interdependence with physical prehensions, generate a power of self-transcendency and result in creative advance of a very high quality, uniquely expressed in human successes. Actual entities, represented by the individual and by societies alike, are energized by this process of becoming, and achieve significant and productive occasions of novelty, which then, again, enter into subsequent processes of this kind of advance.

Creative advance, having these interwoven cognitive and ontological dimensions, draw together the two prevaling views of progress found in educational philosophy. Satisfying a traditional view, progress builds upon a sense of the past that is brought forward by data entering upon the immediate process of becoming which, in part, produces an array of possibilities open to the present as well as the proximate and more distant future. In this respect, Whitehead's notion of creative advance supports an appreciation for, and the substantive involvement of, ideas and ideals of the past within the design and actualization of educational experience. And by way of relating to the progressivist notion of progress, it is within the present moment of experience that the full impact of individual ingenuity and autonomous thinking can and should be manifested. No greater educational success can be achieved than this dual-dimensional advance demonstrated in a harmonization of traditional ideals represented in the innovations of the past with a successful encounter of present exigencies. The conflict between a maintenance of tradition and personal freedom and autonomy can be transposed into a complementarity based on a dialectical integration of otherwise opposing emphases centered on a broadened conception of progress based on the notion of creative advance.

4. Summation

The dialectical nature of Whitehead's metaphysics in general, and the Whiteheadian approach to educational conflict in particular, encompasses the widest possible spectrum of human experiences. Thus, the practices and assertions associated with traditional and progressive education that have been held apart by mutually exclusive views on the nature of the cosmos and reality, and related questions on the nature of intellectual development, knowledge, valuation, progress and creativity, are seen as integral components to one's educational experience as a whole. This appears in Whitehead's discussion of the practical matters facing contemporary education, and his treatment of those abstract issues considered in a substantial range of educational theory and philosophy. It is this resulting dialectical unification of educational theory and philosophy that promises certain benefits (as will be suggested in my concluding remarks) stemming from such a broadened appreciation of formal learning situations.

V. CONCLUSION

The Whiteheadian approach to the conflict of traditional and progressive education transposes the differences exhibited between these two distinctive educational philosophies from an arena of conflict and mutual denigration to a forum where those differences can be appreciated and integrated, and solidly unified under one comprehensive and cohesive view of educational experience. The Whiteheadian approach proposed by this thesis promotes a unification in treating as dialectic the philosophical issues underlying the differences, that is, by interrelating those differences as theoretical and philosophical assertions which constitute the various perspectives and emphases needed to frame that comprehensive, overarching view. The basic tenets of progressive educational philosophy are no longer depicted as reactionary and opposite to those of a traditional educational philosophy, and vice versa, but basic tenets of both are required in a balanced and fully satisfying education.

The special feature of the Whiteheadian approach is its capacity, indeed its requirement, to treat the opposition between educational philosophies in terms of polarities to the various education experiences of students, occurring at different stages in their development, and expressed by innately felt interests, growing intellectual and physical abilities, and deepening responsibilities. Because of the broad philosophical horizon represented by Whitehead's cosmology and metaphysics, no single educational philosophy, either of a traditionalist or of a progressivist type, can be regarded as adequate, since neither satisfactorily explains and affirms those experiences, and neither adequately addresses the philosophically pertinent issues and insights. To be sure, a Whiteheadian educational theory and educational philosophy presented, discussed or alluded to here does not purport to be complete, and on that basis thought to be more desirable and acceptable than any traditional or progressive approach. What is presented in this thesis is, rather, Whitehead's especially attractive and compelling approach, that is, the manner in which the existing conflict can be dealt with. A Whiteheadian approach does not supply all the answers to settle all the questions, but (and herein lies the reason for its superiority) it does offer a framework for dealing with the practical, theoretical and philosophical issues, a framework with latitude enough to positively integrate the widest range of human experiences, and to see diversity of opinion not as an obstacle but as an opportunity to enlarge one's view of the world and enrich one's experiences. Although the Whiteheadian approach to the dialectic is not a complete and fully developed educational theory or educational philosophy, its metaphysical underpinnings in a philosophy of organism, I believe, substantially undergird a comprehensive framework from which one can develop an educational theory and philosophy of education able to respond to and in large measure, settle questions and issues broached by theories as diverse as the traditional and progressive.

1. Overview of the general structure of the discussion

Following an introduction to the problem of conflicting educational theories, and the manner in which it would be tackled, the first major task was to identify the basic issues in conflict, which would later define the elements of the dialectic. The basic philosophical assertions of traditional education and progressive education were outlined in order, initially, to establish the general character of each approach to education, and to identify their respective philosophical distinctives, and then third, to contrast their positions on philosophical questions important to education. This showed the conflict between traditional educational theory and progressive educational theory as rooted in markedly different and generally opposing philosophical views. Such differences in educational theory and underlying philosophy are, from a Whiteheadian perspective, factors in a debate not to establish the superior position, but to determine which components from both traditional and progressive modes of education positively and complementarily contribute to the dialectical unification of educational theory and practice.

Various attempts have been made in the past to deal with the fundamental differences between traditional and progressive education. By describing some of these attempts, it became evident that a comprehensive and thoroughgoing framework is needed to better unify a diffuse and often unnecessarily conflicting plethora of ideas about education. Many past efforts dealt merely with the pedagogical practices of traditional and progressive education. Instances of such attempts, according to sociologically based analyses depict schooling practices solidly divided into the two camps. And certain efforts at extracting their commonalities utilizing the categories and descriptions of sociology seem actually to underscore their opposition and intransigence, and thereby elude any type of unification. Other attempts to mediate the conflict move beyond questions of sociological interest to those of educational theory, and to varying degrees of success achieve some measure of harmony. In one case, particular assertions of traditional education are integrated within a dominant progressivist educational theory, and in another case, progressive views are added to a basically traditionalist approach. Yet another attempt proposes an educational philosophy stemming from a general metaphysics, but in this instance the suggested resolution to the conflict between the educational theories is concerned, almost exclusively (like the metaphysics upon which it is based), with an analysis of human conscious awareness. However important that may be, the conflict in education, I believe, relates to much more than the development of one's intellectual capabilities. Overall, these attempts to resolve the conflict between traditional and progressive education are, at best, only a partial solution, and because of their narrow foci and unyeilding philosophical alignments, they are, ultimately, inadequate.

The fourth segment of the thesis offers an exposition of Whiteheadian philosophy that sees polarities, opposition and conflict in terms of a dialectic. The elements of educational conflict identified in the second chapter are readdressed at this point in terms of the thought of Whitehead and the work of certain scholars he has inspired. A proposed unity to this educational factionalism is shown to be directly informed by his metaphysics that appreciates and incorporates permanence, change, diversity and the tensions resulting from their interplay in its understanding of all actual entities constituting reality. Thus, elements from both traditional and progressive educational theory and philosophy relate to the various moments in educational experience as they occur at various stages and on different levels in a student's development. These elements, together as a more complete view, come to meet, in the first place, practical educational issues that account for a variety of activities needed to create a healthy and productive school environment. They also address the concerns of educational theory, where, on this deeper level, those elements of the dialectic describe and explain the general multi-faceted purpose and character of education. Finally, on the most basic level these elements provide a scope to educational philosophy which intends to come to terms with the great latitude in human experiences and reality _in toto_ with a metaphysics able to ground an explanation of things encompassing and integrating diverse philosophical notions and categories in various degrees of oppositon and conflict. Dealing with the conflict as dialectic is thus shown to address practical and theoretical concerns in education, and shown to provide a wide-ranging treatment of the philosophical issues. A unity so envisaged recognizes the contribution of each element of the dialectic, otherwise seen as isolated and irreconcilable, but now understood as essential to a more adequate accounting of educational experiences and a more satisfying formulation of educational philosophy.

2. The approach as a framework

The Whiteheadian approach to the dialectic has been presented in this inquiry as a response to a particular problem in educational philosophy: thus the approach itself has not been presented as a fully developed philosophy of education or a comprehensive educational theory. Furthermore, this Whiteheadian-based response is not purported to be a definitive answer to educational problems broached by the conflict, since neither the issues identified as elements of the dialectic, nor the Whiteheadian approach is treated exhaustively. But what emerges through the present discussions, which is sufficient for my purposes of showing the nature, and here pointing out the value, of a Whiteheadian approach, are the salient features to a framework for dealing with the dissonance between traditional and progressive education.

In general terms, the framework is firstly and always tentative in nature. Due to the thrust of Whitehead's metaphysics, being a philosophy of organism, the process of reflection on the nature of existence, and the suggested resolution to the educational dialectic in particular, is open to adjustment, revision and, if necessary, reversal, as new problems arise and future exigencies are anticipated. Secondly, the framework, as such, is but an outline. Many centrally important philosophical questions have been broached in the present study, and however enticing an inquiry beyond a vignette of the issues might be, time and space restrictions have allowed a consideration of only the main points. Hoping, then, to draw attention simply to the approach, it is sufficient to grasp but the basic orientation of a resolution, namely, how a Whiteheadian treatment of the elements of the dialectic conjoins distinctive and conflicting educational theories and philosophies. And thirdly, I expect this approach, treated within these limitations, would serve as a useful introduction to any fully developed treatise on Whitehead's thought that would offer a comprehensive and systematic educational philosophy. In short, the present study has been restricted to discussing the approach, and the approach has been depicted as a framework for dealing with the conflict as dialectic.

Despite these general limitations, I believe the framework portrayed here uncovers some specific positive and compelling qualities in the Whiteheadian approach. In the first place, the process metaphysics upon which the entire structure of the approach is based provides the philosophical horizon required in an in-depth analysis of the issues ranging from the practical, to the theoretical, to the philosophical. Such a scope of issues (represented in the variety of elements seen to constitute the dialectic), can be probed in a way that directly and readily relates the questions involved to the foundational questions of the nature of human existence and reality overall. Thus, this framework is able to move beyond a superficiality or partiality found in other approaches to ground a truly substantive treatment. Another strength I find in this approach is its effectiveness in dealing with the dialectical differences and oppositions in a positive way. All actual entities that compose the real universe, according to this philosophy of organism, exhibit polarities and tensions which spark creative growth and vitality. Such polarities and tensions accentuate the need of conflict; they should not generate entrenchments and repudiations, but enjoy an ultimate appropriation and unity, and a wholeness of life. As a framework reflecting such polarities, the Whiteheadian approach is able to anticipate a genuine, positively-based integration and harmony, and betray neither a traditionalist nor a progressivist bias. Under this dialectical rubric, the whole range of educational experiences can be identified and given their proper emphases within a single philosophical horizon. The third strength, as a corollary of the second, is its central focus on educational experiences in their vast array of expression. The approach provides a framework for identifying, organizing, juxtaposing, valuing and harmonizing the expansive scope of human experiences, and for perceiving an educational system appreciative and augmentative of those experiences. A fourth quality in the approach concerns its prescriptive value. Based on the framework elucidated by the present study, current practice and thought in the field of education can be called into question, evaluated in terms of their potential for achieving Whiteheadian educational objectives, and if necessary, be reconstituted within a school curriculum and educational agenda to reflect the cyclical process of learning and the striving toward a wholeness of life. Thus, the approach not only provides the basis for critical analyses but also for creative action in resolving points of contention in pedagogy, educational theory and educational philosophy.

In light of these discussions, and in view of the Whiteheadian dialectical approach overall, the underlying question of this inquiry as to how the reactionary oscillation from one emphasis to the other may be arrested can thus be answered. A comprehensive, philosophically-based unification of educational theory and philosophy can halt this process and settle upon an approach that authentically appreciates basic and important elements of both traditional and progressive education. The Whiteheadian approach aims to do this, and in the process the most important dividend can be reaped, that the student enjoy an entire educational experience attuned to the real character of his very existence, and an education which is responsive to his individually felt needs.

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